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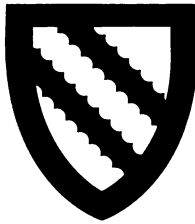
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A Lay Sermon,
ADDRESSED
TO THE HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES
ON THE EXISTING
DISTRESSES AND DISCONTENTS.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all Waters!"

A LAY SERMON,

ADDRESSED TO THE

HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES,

ON THE EXISTING

Distresses and Discontents.

By **S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.**

Εὰν μὴ ἐλπίζητε, ἀνέλπιστον οὐκ εὐρήσετε, ἀνεξερεύνητον ὃν καὶ ἄπορον.
HERACLITUS *apud Theodoret*, Vol. iv. p. 716.

If ye do not hope, ye will not find; for in despairing ye block up the mine at its mouth! ye extinguish the torch, even when ye are already in the shaft,

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1817.

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Hincks fund

GOD AND THE WORLD WE WORSHIP STILL TOGETHER,
DRAW NOT OUR LAWS TO HIM, BUT HIS TO OURS;
UNTRUE TO BOTH, SO PROSPEROUS IN NEITHER,
THE IMPERFECT WILL BRINGS FORTH BUT BARREN FLOWERS!
UNWISE AS ALL DISTRACTED INTERESTS BE,
STRANGERS TO GOD, FOOLS IN HUMANITY:
TOO GOOD FOR GREAT THINGS AND TOO GREAT FOR GOOD,
WHILE STILL "*I DARE NOT*" WAITS UPON "*I WOU'D!*"

S. Curtis, Printer,
Camberwell.

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INTRODUCTION.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN ! You I mean, who fill the higher and middle stations of society ! The comforts, perchance the splendors, that surround you, designate your rank, but cannot constitute your moral and personal fitness for it. Be it enough for others to know, that you are its *legal*—but by what mark shall you stand accredited to your own consciences, as its *worthy*—possessors ? Not by common sense or common honesty ; for these are equally demanded of all classes, and therefore mere negative qualifications in *your* rank of life, or characteristic only by the aggravated ignominy consequent on their absence. Not by genius or splendid talent : for these, as being gifts of Nature, are objects of moral interest for those alone, to whom they have

been allotted. Nor yet by eminence in learning; for this supposes such a devotion of time and thought, as would in many cases be incompatible with the claims of active life. Erudition is, doubtless, an *ornament*, that especially beseeues a high station: but it is *professional* rank only that renders its attainment a duty.

The mark in question must be so far *common*, that we may be entitled to look for it in *you* from the mere circumstance of your situation, and so far distinctive, that it must be such as cannot be expected generally from the inferior classes. Now either there is no such criterion in existence, or the Desideratum is to be found in an *habitual consciousness of the ultimate principles, to which your opinions are traceable*. The least, that can be demanded of the least favored among you, is an earnest *endeavour* to walk in the Light of your own knowledge; and not, as the *mass* of mankind, by laying hold on the skirts of Custom. Blind followers of a blind and capricious guide,

forced likewise (though oftener, I fear, by their own improvidence, * than by the lowness of of their estate) to consume Life in the means

* A truth, that should not however be said, save in the spirit of charity, and with the palliating reflection, that this very improvidence has hitherto been, though not the inevitable, yet the *natural* result of Poverty and the Poor Laws. With what gratitude I venerate my country and its laws, my humble publications from the "FEARS IN SOLITUDE" printed in 1798, to the present discourse bear witness.—Yet the POOR LAWS and the REVENUE!—if I permitted myself to dwell on these exclusively, I should be tempted to fancy that the domestic seals were put in commission and entrusted to Argus, Briareus, and Cacus, as lords of the commonalty. Alas! it is easy to see the evil; but to imagine a remedy is difficult in exact proportion to the experience and good sense of the seeker. That excellent man, Mr. Perceval, whom I regard as the best and wisest statesman, this country has possessed since the revolution (I judge only from his measures and the reports of his speeches in parliament; for I never saw him, that I know of) went into the ministry, with the design as well as the wish of abolishing lotteries. I was present at a table, when this intention was announced by a venerable relative of the departed statesman, who loved and honored the *man*, but widely dissented from him as a politician. Except myself, all present were partizans of the opposition; but all avowed their determination on this score alone, as a great moral precedent, to support the new minister.—What was the result? Two lotteries in the first year instead of one! The door of the cabinet has a quality the most opposite to the Ivory Gate of Virgil. It suffers no dreams to pass through it. Alas! as far

of living, the multitude may make the sad confession

Tempora mutantur: nos et mutamur in illis
unabashed. But to English Protestants in the enjoyment of a present competency, much more to such as are defended against the anxious Future, it must needs be a grievous dishonor (and not the less grievous, though perhaps less striking, from its frequency) to change with the times, and thus to debase their motives and maxims, the sacred house-

as any *wide* scheme of benevolence is concerned, the inscription over it might seem to be the Dantéan

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate!

We judge harshly because we expect irrationally. But on the other hand, this disproportion of the power to the wish will, sooner or later, end in that tame acquiescence in things as they are, which is the sad symptom of a moral *necrosis* commencing. And commence it will, if its causes are not counteracted by the philosophy of history, that is, by history read in the spirit of prophecy! if they are not overcome by the faith which, still re-kindling hope, still re-enlivens charity. Without the knowledge of Man, the knowledge of Men is a hazardous acquisition. What insight might not our statesmen acquire from the study of the Bible merely as history, if only they had been previously accustomed to study history in the same spirit, as that in which good men read the Bible!

hold of conscience, into slaves and creatures of fashion. *Thou therefore art inexcusable, O man!* (Rom. II. i.) if thou dost not give to thyself a reason for the faith that is in thee : if thou dost not thereby learn the safety and the blessedness of that other apostolic precept, *Whatsoever ye do, do it in FAITH.* Your habits of reflection should at least be equal to your opportunities of leisure : and to that which is itself a species of leisure—your immunity from bodily labour, from the voice and lash of the imperious ever-recurring **THIS DAY!** Your attention to the objects, that stretch away below you in the living landscape of good and evil, and your researches into their existing or practicable bearings on each other, should be proportional to the elevation that extends and diversifies your prospect. If you possess more than is necessary for your own wants, more than your own wants ought to be felt by you as your own interests. You are pacing on a smooth terrace, which you owe to the happy institutions of your country,—a terrace on the mountain's breast.

To what purpose, by what *moral* right, if you continue to gaze only on the sod beneath your feet? Or if converting means into ends and with all your thoughts and efforts absorbed in selfish schemes of climbing cloudward, you turn your back on the wide landscape, and stoop the lower, the higher you ascend.

The remedial and prospective advantages, that may be rationally anticipated from the habit of contemplating particulars in their universal laws; its tendency at once to fix and to liberalize the morality of private life; at once to produce and enlighten the spirit of public zeal; and let me add, its especial utility in recalling the origin and primary purport of the term, **GENEROSITY**,* to the heart and thoughts of a populace tampered with by sophists and incendiaries of the revolutionary school; these advantages I have felt it my duty and have made it my main object

* A genre: the qualities either supposed natural and instinctive to men of noble race, or such as their rank is calculated to inspire, as disinterestedness, devotion to the service of their friends, clients, &c. frankness, &c.

to press on your serious attention during the whole period of my literary labors from earliest manhood to the present hour. *
 Whatever may have been the specific theme of my communications, and whether they related to criticism, politics, or religion, still PRINCIPLES, their subordination, their connection, and their application, in all the divisions of our tastes, duties, rules of conduct

* In testimony of the fact, and no less of the small change, my own public and political principles have undergone, I might appeal to the CONCIONES AD POPULUM, delivered at Bristol in the year 1794; but that, though a few copies were printed, they can scarcely be said to have been published. The first of these "Lay-sermons," (which was likewise the firstling of my authorship) I intend to include in the republication or rather the *rin-faciamento* of the FRIEND. I prefer the latter word, because every part will be omitted which could not be brought to conclusion and completion within the extent allotted to the work (three volumes of the size of the British Essayists;) their place supplied by new articles; and the whole arranged anew.) The FRIEND likewise has never been *published* in the ordinary sense of the term. The numbers printed weekly on stamped paper were sent by the post to a scanty number of subscribers and (a sad but important distinction!) to a still scantier number of *subscriptionists*.—*φωρᾶντα συνέτοιμα ἔς δὲ τὸ Πᾶν ἐρμηνεύς χαρίζεαι.*

and schemes of belief, have constituted my chapter of contents.

It is an unsafe partition, that divides opinions without principle from unprincipled opinions. If the latter are not followed by correspondent actions, we are indebted for the escape, not to the agent himself, but to his habits of education, to the sympathies of superior rank, to the necessity of character, often, perhaps, to the absence of temptation from providential circumstances or the accident of a gracious Nature. These, indeed, are truths of all times and places; but I seemed to see especial reason for insisting on them in our own times. A long and attentive observation had convinced me, that formerly MEN WERE WORSE THAN THEIR PRINCIPLES, but that at present the PRINCIPLES ARE WORSE THAN THE MEN.

Few are sufficiently aware how much reason most of us have, even as common moralivers, to thank God for being ENGLISHMEN. It would furnish grounds both for humility towards Providence and for increased attach-

ment to our country, if each individual could but see and feel, how large a part of his innocence he owes to his birth, breeding, and residence in Great Britain. The administration of the laws; the almost continual preaching of moral prudence; the number and respectability of our sects; the pressure of our ranks on each other, with the consequent reserve and watchfulness of demeanor in the superior ranks, and the emulation in the subordinate; the vast depth, expansion and systematic movements of our trade; and the consequent inter-dependence, the arterial or nerve-like *net-work* of property, which make every deviation from outward integrity a calculable loss to the offending individual himself from its mere effects, as obstruction and irregularity; and lastly, the naturalness of doing as others do:—these and the like influences, peculiar, some in the kind and all in the degree, to this privileged island, are the buttresses, on which our foundationless well-doing is upheld, even as a house of

cards, the architecture of our infancy, in which each is supported by all.

Well then may we pray, give us peace in our time, O Lord! Well for us, if no revolution, or other general visitation, betray the *true* state of our national morality! But above all, well will it be for us if *even now* we dare disclose the secret to our own souls! Well will it be for as many of us as have duly reflected on the Prophet's assurance, *that we must take root downwards if we would bear fruit upwards*; if we would bear fruit, and *continue* to bear fruit, when the foodful plants that stand straight, only because they grow in company; or whose slender surface-roots owe their whole steadfastness to their intertangement; have been beaten down by the continued rains, or whirled aloft by the sudden hurricane! Nor have we far to seek for whatever it is most important that we should find. The wisdom from above has not ceased for us! "*The principles of the oracles of God*" (Heb. v. 12).

are still uttered from before the altar! ORACLES, which we may consult without cost! Before an ALTAR, where no sacrifice is required, but of the vices which unman us! no victims demanded, but the unclean and animal passions, which we may have suffered to house within us, forgetful of our baptismal dedication—no victim, but the spiritual sloth, or goat, or fox, or hog, which lay waste the vineyard that the Lord had fenced and planted for himself.

I have endeavored in a previous discourse to persuade the more highly gifted and educated part of my friends and fellow-christians, that as the *New Testament* sets forth the means and conditions of spiritual convalescence, with all the laws of conscience relative to our future state and permanent Being; so does the *Bible* present to us the elements of *public* prudence, instructing us in the true causes, the surest preventives, and the only cures, of public evils. The authorities of Raleigh, Clarendon and Milton must at least exempt me from the blame of singularity, if

undeterred by the contradictory charges of paradoxy from one party and of adherence to vulgar and old-fashioned prejudices from the other, I persist in avowing my conviction, that the inspired poets, historians and sententiaries of the Jews, are the clearest teachers of political economy: in short, that their writings* are the STATESMAN'S BEST

* To which I should be tempted with the late Edmund Burke to annex that treasure of prudential wisdom, the Ecclesiasticus. I not only yield, however, to the authority of our Church, but, reverence the judgment of its founders in separating this work from the list of the Canonical Books, and in refusing to apply it to the establishment of any *doctrine*, while they caused it to be "read for example of life and instruction of manners." Excellent, nay, invaluable, as this book is in the place assigned to it by our Church, that place is justified on the clearest grounds. For not to say that the compiler himself, candidly cautions us against the imperfections of his translation, and its *no small* difference from the original Hebrew, as it was written by his grandfather, he so expresses himself in his prologue as to exclude all claims to inspiration or divine authority in any other or higher sense than every writer is entitled to make, who having qualified himself by the careful study of the books of other men had been drawn on to write something himself. But of still greater weight, *practically*, are the objections derived from certain passages of the Book, which savour too plainly of the fancies and prejudices of a jew of

MANUAL, not only as containing the first principles and ultimate grounds of state-policy whether in prosperous times or in those of danger and distress, but as supplying likewise the details of their *application*, and as being a full and spacious repository of precedents and facts in proof.

Well therefore (again and again I repeat

Jerusalem : ex. gr. the 25th and 26th verses of chapter L ; and of greater still the objections drawn from other passages, as from chapter 41st. which by implication and obvious inference are nearly tantamount to a denial of a future state, and bear too great a resemblance to the ethics of the Greek poets and orators in the substitution of posthumous fame for a *true* resurrection, and a consequent *personal* endurance ; the substitution in short, of a nominal for a real immortality, and lastly from the *prudential* spirit of the maxims in general, in which prudence is taught too much on its own grounds instead of being recommended as the organ or vehicle of a spiritual principle in its existing worldly relations. In short, prudence ceases to be wisdom when it is not to the filial fear of God, and to the sense of the excellence of the divine laws, what the body is to the soul ! Now, in the work of the son of Sirach, prudence is both body and soul.

It were perhaps to be wished, that this work, and the wisdom of Solomon had alone received the honor of being accompaniments to the inspired writings, and that these should, with a short precautionary preface and a

to you,) well will it be for us if we have provided ourselves from this armory while "yet the day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity" appears at far distance and only "in the valley of Vision:" if we have humbled ourselves and have confessed our thin and unsound state, even while "from the uttermost parts of the earth we were hearing songs of praise and glory to the upright nation. (Is. xxii. 5. xxiv. 16.)

But if indeed the day of treading down is present, it is still in our power to convert it into a time of substantial discipline for ourselves, and of enduring benefit to the present generation and to posterity. The splendor of our exploits, during the late war, is less honorable to us than the magnanimity of our views, and our generous confidence in the victory of the better cause. Accordingly, we have

few notes have been printed in *all* our Bibles. The remaining books might without any loss have been left for the learned or for as many as were prompted by curiosity to purchase them, in a separate volume. Even of the Maccabees not above a third part can be said to possess any historic value, as authentic accounts.

obtained a good name, so that the nations arround us have displayed a disposition to follow our example and imitate our institutions—too often I fear even in parts where from the difference of our relative circumstances the imitation had little chance of proving more than mimickry. But it will be far more glorious, and to our neighbours incomparably more instructive, if in distresses to which all countries are liable we bestir ourselves in remedial and preventive arrangements which all nations may more or less adopt; inasmuch as they are grounded on principles intelligible to all rational and obligatory on all moral beings; inasmuch as, having been taught by God's word, exemplified by God's providence, commanded by God's law, and recommended by promises of God's grace, they alone can form the foundations of a christian community. Do we love our country? These are the principles, by which the true friend of the people is contradistinguished from the factious demagogue. They are at once the rock and the quarry. On these alone and with these alone is the solid

welfare of a people to be built. Do we love our own souls? These are the principles, the neglect of which writes hypocrite and suicide on the brow of the professing christian. For these are the keystone of that arch on which alone we can cross the torrent of life and death with safety on the passage; with peace in the retrospect; and with hope shining upon us from through the cloud, toward which we are travelling. Not, my christian friends! by all the lamps of worldly wisdom clustered in one blaze, can we guide our paths so securely as by fixing our eyes on this inevitable cloud, through which all must pass, which at every step becomes darker and more threatening to the children of this world, but to the children of faith and obedience still thins away as they approach, to melt at length and dissolve into that glorious light, from which as so many gleams and reflections of the same falling on us during our mortal pilgrimage, we derive all principles of true and lively knowledge, alike in science and in morals, alike in communities and in individuals.

It has been my purpose throughout the following discourse to guard myself and my Readers from extremes of all kinds: I will therefore conclude this Introduction by enforcing the maxim in its relation to our religious opinions, out of which, with or without our consciousness, all our other opinions flow, as from their Spring-head and perpetual Feeder. And that I might neglect no innocent mode of attracting or relieving the Reader's attention, I have moulded my reflections into the following

ALLEGORIC VISION.

A feeling of sadness, a peculiar melancholy, is wont to take possession of me alike in Spring and in Autumn. But in Spring it is the melancholy of Hope: in Autumn it is the melancholy of Resignation. As I was journeying on foot through the Appennine, I fell in with a pilgrim in whom the Spring and the Autumn and the Melancholy of both seemed to have combined. In his discourse

there were the freshness and the colors of April:

Qual ramicel a ramo,
Tal da pensier pensiero
In lui germogliava.

But as I gazed on his whole form and figure, I bethought me of the not unlovely decays, both of age and of the late season, in the stately elm; after the clusters have been plucked from its entwining vines, and the vines are as bands of dried withies around its trunk and branches. Even so there was a memory on his smooth and ample forehead, which blended with the dedication of his steady eyes, that still looked—I know not, whether upward, or far onward, or rather to the line of meeting where the sky rests upon the distance. But how may I express—the breathed tarnish, shall I name it?—on the lustre of the pilgrim's eyes? Yet had it not a sort of strange accordance with their slow and reluctant movement, whenever he turned them to any object on the right hand or on the left? It seemed, methought, as if there lay upon

the brightness a shadowy presence of disappointments now unfelt, but never forgotten. It was at once the melancholy of hope and of resignation.

We had not long been fellow-travellers, ere a sudden tempest of wind and rain forced us to seek protection in the vaulted door-way of a lone chapelry: and we sate face to face each on the stone bench along-side the low, weather-stained wall, and as close as possible to the massy door.

After a pause of silence: Even thus, said he, like two strangers that have fled to the same shelter from the same storm, not seldom do Despair and Hope meet for the first time in the porch of Death! All extremes meet, I answered; but your's was a strange and visionary thought. The better then doth it beseem both the place and me, he replied. From a VISIONARY wilt thou hear a VISION? Mark that vivid flash through this torrent of rain! Fire and water. Even here thy adage holds true, and its truth is the moral of my Vision. I entreated him to proceed. Sloping his face toward the

arch and yet averting his eye from it, he seemed to seek and prepare his words: till listening to the wind that echoed within the hollow edifice, and to the rain without,

Which stole on his thoughts with its two-fold sound,
The clash hard by and the murmur all round,

he gradually sunk away, alike from me and from his own purpose, and amid the gleom of the storm and in the duskiness of that place he sate like an emblem on a rich man's sepulchre, or like an aged mourner on the sodded grave of an only one, who is watching the wained moon and sorroweth not. Starting at length from his brief trance of abstraction, with courtesy and an atoning smile he renewed his discourse, and commenced his parable.

During one of those short furlows from the service of the Body, which the Soul may sometimes obtain even in this, its militant state, I found myself in a vast plain, which I immediately knew to be the VALLEY OF LIFE. It possessed an astonishing diversity of soils: and

here was a sunny spot, and there a dark one, forming just such a mixture of sunshine and shade, as we may have observed on the mountains' side in an April day, when the thin broken clouds are scattered over heaven. Almost in the very entrance of the valley stood a large and gloomy pile, into which I seemed constrained to enter. Every part of the building was crowded with tawdry ornaments and fantastic deformity. On every window was pourtrayed, in glaring and inelegant colors, some horrible tale, or preternatural incident, so that not a ray of light could enter, untinged by the medium through which it passed. The body of the building was full of people, some of them dancing, in and out, in unintelligible figures, with strange ceremonies and antic merriment, while others seemed convulsed with horror, or pining in mad melancholy. Intermingled with these, I observed a number of men, clothed in ceremonial robes, who appeared now to marshal the various groups, and to direct their movements; and now with menacing countenances,

to drag some reluctant victim to a vast idol, framed of iron bars intercrossed, which formed at the same time an immense cage, and the form of a human Colossus.

I stood for a while lost in wonder, what these things might mean; when lo! one of the Directors came up to me, and with a stern and reproachful look bade me uncover my head; for that the place, into which I had entered, was the temple of the only true Religion, in the holier recesses of which the great Goddess personally resided. Himself too he bade me reverence, as the consecrated Minister of her Rites. Awe-struck by the name of Religion, I bowed before the Priest, and humbly and earnestly intreated him to conduct me into her presence. He assented. Offerings he took from me, with mystic sprinklings of water and with salt he purified, and with strange sufflations he exorcized me; and then led me through many a dark and winding alley, the dew-damps of which chilled my flesh, and the hollow echoes under my feet, mingled, methought, with moanings,

affrighted me. At length we entered a large hall where not even a single lamp glimmered. It was made half visible by the wan phosphoric rays which proceeded from inscriptions on the walls, in letters of the same pale and sepulchral light. I could read them, methought; but though each one of the words taken separately I seemed to understand, yet when I took them in sentences, they were riddles and incomprehensible. As I stood meditating on these hard sayings, my guide thus addressed me—The fallible becomes infallible, and the infallible remains fallible. Read and believe: these are MYSTERIES!—In the middle of the vast hall the Goddess was placed. Her features, blended with darkness, rose out to my view, terrible, yet vacant. No definite thought, no distinct image was afforded me: all was uneasy and obscure feeling. I prostrated myself before her, and then retired with my guide, soul-withered, and wondering, and dissatisfied.

As I re-entered the body of the temple, I heard a deep buzz as of discontent. A few

whose eyes were bright, and either piercing or steady, and whose ample foreheads, with the weighty bar, ridge-like, above the eyebrows, bespoke observation followed by meditative thought; and a much larger number who were enraged by the severity and insolence of the priests in exacting their offerings; had collected in one tumultuous groupe, and with a confused outcry of "this is the Temple of SUPERSTITION!" after much contumely, and turmoil, and cruel maltreatment on all sides, rushed out of the pile; and I, methought, joined them.

We speeded from the Temple with hasty steps, and had now nearly gone round half the valley, when we were addressed by a woman, tall beyond the stature of mortals, and with a something more than human in her countenance and mien, which yet could by mortals be only felt, not conveyed by words or intelligibly distinguished. Deep reflection, animated by ardent feelings, was displayed in them: and hope, without its uncertainty, and a something more than

all these, which I understood not; but which yet seemed to blend all these into a divine unity of expression. Her garments were white and matronly, and of the simplest texture. We enquired her name. My name, she replied, is RELIGION.

The more numerous part of our company, affrighted by the very sound, and sore from recent impostures or sorceries, hurried onwards and examined no farther. A few of us, struck by the manifest opposition of her form and manners to those of the living Idol, whom we had so recently abjured, agreed to follow her, though with cautious circumspection. She led us to an eminence in the midst of the valley, from the top of which we could command the whole plain, and observe the relation of the different parts, of each to the other, and of each to the whole, and of all to each. She then gave us an optic glass which assisted without contradicting our natural vision, and enabled us to see far beyond the limits of the Valley of Life: though our eye even thus assisted permitted:

us only to behold a light and a glory, but what we could not descry, save only that it *was*, and that it was most glorious.

And now with the rapid transition of a dream, I had overtaken and rejoined the more numerous party, who had abruptly left us, indignant at the very name of religion. They journeyed on, goading each other with remembrances of past oppressions, and never looking back, till in the eagerness to recede from the Temple of Superstition they had rounded the whole circle of the valley. And lo! there faced us the mouth of a vast cavern, at the base of a lofty and almost perpendicular rock, the interior side of which, unknown to them, and unsuspected, formed the extreme and backward wall of the Temple. An impatient crowd, we entered the vast and dusky cave, which was the only perforation of the precipice. At the mouth of the cave sat two figures; the first, by her dress and gestures, I knew to be SENSUALITY; the second form, from the fierceness of his demeanour, and the brutal scornfulness of his

looks, declared himself to be the Monster
BLASPHEMY. He uttered big words, and yet
ever and anon I observed that he turned pale
at his own courage. We entered. Some
remained in the opening of the cave, with the
one or the other of its guardians. The rest,
and I among them, pressed on, till we reached
an ample chamber, that seemed the centre of
the rock. The climate of the place was un-
naturally cold.

In the furthest distance of the chamber sat
an old dim-eyed man, poring with a mi-
croscope over the Torso of a statue, which
had neither basis, nor feet, nor head; but on
its breast was carved, NATURE! To this he
continually applied his glass, and seemed en-
raptured with the various inequalities which
it rendered visible on the seemingly polished
surface of the marble.—Yet evermore was
this delight and triumph followed by ex-
pressions of hatred, and vehement railing
against a Being, who yet, he assured us,
had no existence. This mystery suddenly
recalled to me what I had read in the Holiest

Recess of the temple of *Superstition*. The old man spoke in divers tongues, and continued to utter other and most strange mysteries. Among the rest he talked much and vehemently concerning an infinite series of causes and effects, which he explained to be—a string of blind men, the last of whom caught hold of the skirt of the one before him, he of the next, and so on till they were all out of sight: and that they all walked infallibly straight, without making one false step, though all were alike blind. Methought I borrowed courage from surprize, and asked him—Who then is at the head to guide them? He looked at me with ineffable contempt, not unmingled with an angry suspicion, and then replied, “No one.” The string of blind men went on for ever without any beginning: for although one blind man could not move without stumbling, yet infinite blindness supplied the want of sight. I burst into laughter, which instantly turned to terror—for as he started forward in rage, I caught a glance of him from behind; and lo!

I beheld a monster bi-form and Janus-headed, in the hinder face and shape of which I instantly recognized the dread countenance of SUPERSTITION—and in the terror I awoke.

A
LAY SERMON, &c.

ISAIAH, xxxii. 20.

Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.

ON all occasions the Beginning should look toward the End; and most of all when we offer counsel concerning circumstances of great distress, and of still greater alarm. But such is our business at present, and the common duty of all whose competence justifies the attempt. And therefore, my Christian Friends and Fellow Englishmen, have I *in a day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity*, taken my Beginning from this animating assurance of an inspired Messenger to *the Devisers of liberal things*, (xxxii. 8.) who confident in hope are fearless in charity. For to enforce the Precept involved in this gladsome annun-

ciation of the Evangelical Herald, to awaken the lively Feeling which it breathes, and to justify the line of conduct which it encourages, are the End to which my present efforts are directed—the ultimate object of the present Address, to which all the other points, therein discussed, are but introductory and preparative.

‘Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.’ It is the assurance of a Prophet, and therefore *Surety* itself to all who profess to receive him as such. It is a Command in the form of a Promise, which at once instructs us in our duty and forecloses every possible objection to its performance. It is at once our Guide and our Pioneer!—a Breeze from Heaven, which at one and the same time determines our path, impels us along it, and removes beforehand, each overhanging cloud that might have conspired with our own dimness to bewilder or to dishearten us. Whatever our own Despondence may whisper, or the reputed Masters of Political Economy may have seemed to demonstrate, neither by the fears and scruples of the one, or by the confident affirmations of the other, dare we be deterred. They must both be false if the Prophet is true. We will still in the power of that faith which can *hope even against*

hope continue to sow beside all waters: for there is a Blessing attached to it by God himself, to whose eye all consequences are present, on whose will all consequences depend.

But I had also an additional motive for the selection of this verse. Easy to be remembered from its Briefness, likely to be remembered from its beauty, and with not a single word in it which the malignant ingenuity of Faction could pervert to the excitement of any dark or turbulent feeling, I chose it both as the Text and Title of this Discourse, that it might be brought under the eye of many thousands who will know no more of the Discourse itself than what they read in the advertisements of it in our public papers.

In point of fact it was another passage of Scripture, the words of another Prophet, that originally occasioned this Address, by one of those accidental circumstances, that so often determine the current of our Thoughts. From a company among whom the distresses of the times and the disappointments of the public expectations had been agitated with more warmth than wisdom, I had retired to solitude and silent meditation. A Bible chanced to lie open on the table, my eyes

were cast idly on the page for a few seconds, till gradually as a mist clears away, the following words became visible, and at once fixed my attention. ‘ We looked for peace, but no good came ; for a time of health and behold trouble.’—I turned to the beginning of the chapter : it was the eighth of the prophet Jeremiah, and having read it to the end, I repeated aloud the verses which had become connected in my memory by their pertinency to the conversation, to which I had been so lately attending : namely, the 11th, 15th, 20th, and 22d.

They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace. We looked for Peace, but no good came : for a time of health, and behold, trouble ! The harvest is past, the summer is ended : and we are not saved. Is there no balm in Gilead ? Is there no physician ? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?

These impassioned remonstrances, these heart-probing interrogatories, of the lamenting Prophet, do indeed anticipate a full, and alas ! a too faithful statement of the case, to the public consideration of which we have all of late been so often and so urgently invited, and

the inward thought of which our very countenances betray, as by a communion of alarm. In the bold painting of Scripture language, *all faces gather blackness*, the Many at the supposed magnitude of the national embarrassment, the Wise at the more certain and far more alarming evil of its moral accompaniments. And they not only contain the state of the case, but suggest the most natural scheme and order of treating it. I avail myself, therefore, of the passage as a part of my text, with the less scruple because it will be found to supply of itself the requisite link of connection. The case itself, the plain fact admitted by men of all parties among us, is, as I have just observed, and as you will yourselves have felt at the first perusal of the words, described by anticipation in the intermediate verses; yet with such historic precision, so plain and so specifically as to render all comment needless, all application superfluous. Peace has come without the advantages expected from Peace, and on the contrary, with many of the severest inconveniences usually attributable to War. 'We looked for peace, but no good came: for a time of health and behold trouble. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we

are not saved.' The inference therefore contained in the preceding verse is unavoidable. Where war has produced no repentance, and the cessation of war has brought neither concord or tranquility, we may safely cry aloud with the Prophet: 'They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace.' The whole remaining subject therefore may be comprized in the three questions implied in the last of the verses, recited to you; in three questions, and in the answers to the same. First, who are they who have hitherto prescribed for the case, and are still tampering with it? What are their qualifications? What has been their conduct? Second, What is the true seat and source of the complaint,—the ultimate causes as well as the immediate occasions? And lastly, What are the appropriate medicines? Who and where are the true physicians?

And first then of those who have been ever loud and foremost in their pretensions to a knowledge both of the disease and the remedy. In a preceding part of the same chapter from which I extracted the line prefixed, the Prophet Isaiah enumerates the conditions of a nation's recovery from a state

of depression and peril, and among these one condition which he describes in words that may be without any forced or over-refined interpretation unfolded into an answer to the present question. 'A vile person,' he tells us, 'must no more be called liberal, nor the churl be said to be bountiful. For the vile person shall speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity to practice hypocrisy and to utter error against the Lord ; to make empty the soul of the needy, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh aright. BUT THE LIBERAL DEVISETH LIBERAL THINGS, AND BY LIBERAL THINGS SHALL HE STAND.' (Isaiah, xxxii. 5, 6, 7, 8.)

Such are the political empirics mischievous in proportion to their effrontery, and ignorant in proportion to their presumption, the detection and exposure of whose true characters the inspired statesman and patriot represents as indispensable to the re-establishment of the general welfare, while his own portrait of these impostors whom in a former chapter (ix. 15. 16.) he calls, *the tail of*

the Nation, and in the following verse, *Demagogues that cause the people to err*, affords to the intelligent believer of all ages and countries the means of detecting them, and of undeceiving all whose own malignant passions have not rendered them blind and deaf and brutish. For these noisy and calumnious zealots, whom (with an especial reference indeed to the factious leaders of the populace who under this name exercised a tumultuary despotism in Jerulsalem, at once a sign and a cause of its approaching downfall) St. John beheld in the Apocalyptic vision as a compound of Locust and Scorpion, are not of one place or of one season. They are the perennials of history : and though they may disappear for a time, they exist always in the egg and need only a distempered atmosphere and an accidental ferment to start up into life and activity.

It is worth our while therefore, or rather it is our duty, to examine with a more attentive eye this representative portrait drawn for us by an infallible master, and to distinguish its component parts, each by itself, so that we may combine without confusing them in our memory ; till they blend at

length into one physiognomic expression, which whenever the counterpart is obtruded on our notice in the sphere of our own experience, may be at once recognized, and enable us to convince ourselves of the identity by a comparison of feature with feature.

The passage commences with a fact, which to the inexperienced might well seem strange and improbable; but which being a truth nevertheless of our own knowledge, is the more striking and characteristic. Worthless persons of little or no estimation for rank, learning, or integrity, not seldom profligates, with whom debauchery has outwrestled repacity, easy because unprincipled and generous because dishonest, are suddenly cried up as men of enlarged views and liberal sentiments, our only genuine patriots and philanthropists: and churls, that is, men of sullen tempers and surly demeanor; men tyrannical in their families, oppressive and troublesome to their dependents and neighbours, and hard in their private dealings between man and man; men who clench with one hand what they have grasped with the other; these are extolled as public benefactors, the friends, guardians, and advocates of the poor! Here and there

indeed we may notice an individual of birth and fortune

(For great estates enlarge not narrow minds)

who has been duped into the ranks of incendiaries and mob-sycophants by an insane restlessness, and the wretched ambition of figuring as the triton of the minnows. Or we may find perhaps a professional man of shewy accomplishments but of a vulgar taste, and shallow acquirements, who in part from vanity, and in part as a means of introduction to practice, will seek notoriety by an eloquence well calculated to set the multitude agape, and excite *gratis* to overt-acts of sedition or treason which he may afterwards be fee'd to defend! These however are but exceptions to the general rule. Such as the Prophet has described, such is the *sort* of men; and in point of historic fact it has been from men of this sort, *that profaneness is gone forth into all the land.* (Jeremiah, xxiii. 15.)

In harmony with the general character of these false prophets, are the particular qualities assigned to them. First, a passion for vague and violent invective, an habitual and inveterate predilection for the language of

hate, and rage and contumely, an ungoverned appetite for abuse and defamation! THE VILE WILL TALK VILLAINY.

But the fetid flower will ripen into the poisonous berry, and the fruits of the hand follow the blossoms of the slanderous lips. HIS HEART WILL WORK INIQUITY. That is, he will plan evil, and do his utmost to carry his plans into execution. The guilt exists already; and there wants nothing but power and opportunity to condense it into crime and overt-act. *He that hateth his brother is a murderer!* says St. John: and of many and various sorts are the brother-haters, in whom this truth may be exemplified. Most appropriately for our purpose, Isaiah has selected the fratricide of sedition, and with the eagle eye and practised touch of an intuitive demonstrator he unfolds the composition of the character, part by part, in the secret history of the agent's wishes, designs and attempts, of his ways, his means, and his ends. The agent himself, the incendiary and his kindling combustibles, had been already sketched by Solomon, with the rapid yet faithful outline of a master in the art: '*The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness and the end of his talk mischievous madness.*' Eccle-

siastes, x. 13. If in the spirit of Prophecy,* the wise Ruler had been present to our own times, and their procedures; if while he sojourned in *the valley of vision* he had actually heard the very harangues of our reigning demagogues to the convened populace;

* Solomon has himself informed us, that beyond wealth and conquest, and as of far greater importance to him, in his arduous office of King and Magistrate, he had *sought through knowledge of wisdom to lay hold on folly*: that is, by the study of *Man*, to arrive at a grounded knowledge of *Men*, and through a previous insight into the nature and conditions of *Good* to acquire by inference a thorough comprehension of the *Evil* that arises from its deficiency or perversion. And truly in all points of 'prudence, public and private, we may accommodate to the Royal Preacher his own words: (Ecclesiastes, ii. 12.) *What can the man say that cometh after the King? Even that which hath been said already.*

In a preceding page we have interpreted the fifth trumpet in the Apocalypse, of the Zelotæ during the siege of Jerusalem: to the Romans therefore, and their Oriental Allies, we must refer the sounding of the sixth Angel, in this sublime and magnificent drama acted in Heaven, before the whole Host of Heaven, the personal Friend of the Incarnate God attending as the Representative of Human Nature, and in her behalf looking and listening with fearful awe to the prophetic symbols of her destiny! But had I dared imitate the major part of the Commentators, and followed the *fatuous fires* of FANCY, that "shrewd sprite" ever busiest when in the service of pre-conceived partialities and antipathies, I

could he have more faithfully characterized either the speakers or the speeches? Whether in spoken or in printed Addresses, whether in periodical Journals or in yet cheaper implements of irritation, the ends are the same, the process is the same, and the same is their general

might have suffered my judgment to be seduced by the wonderful (*apparent*) aptness of the symbols, (many of them at least) and extended the application of the first eleven verses to the whole chapter, the former as treating of the Demagogues exclusively, the latter as including their infatuated followers likewise. For what other images, concorporated according to the rules of Hieroglyphic Syntax, could form more appropriate and significant exponents of a seditious and riotous multitude, with the mob-orators, their *Heads* or Leaders, than the thousands of pack-horses (*jumenta sarcinaria*) with *heads* resembling those of a roaring wild beast, with smoke, fire and brimstone (that is, empty, unintelligible, incendiary, calumnious, and offensively foul language) issuing from their mouths? 'For their power is in their *Mouths* and in their Tails; and they have *Heads*, and by means of them they do hurt.'

The authenticity of this canonical Book rests on the firmest grounds, both of outward testimony and internal evidence. But it has been most strangely abused and perverted from the Millenarians of the primitive Church to the religious Politicians of our own times. My own conception of the Book is, that it narrates in the broad and inclusive form of the ancient Prophets (i. e. in the prophetic power of faith and moral insight irradiated by inspiration) the successive struggles and final triumph of

line of conduct. On all occasions, but most of all and with a more bustling malignity, whenever any public distress inclines the lower classes to turbulence, and renders them more apt to be alienated from the government of their country—in all places and at every opportunity pleading *to* the Poor and Ignorant, no where and at no time are they found actually pleading *for* them. Nor is this the worst. They even plead against them. Yes! Sy-cophants to the *crowd*, enemies of the *individuals*, and well-wishers only to the continuance of their miseries, they plead *against* the poor and afflicted, under the weak and wicked pretence, that we are to do nothing of what we can, because we cannot do all, that we would wish. Or if this sophistry of

Christianity over the Paganism and Judaism of the then Roman Empire, typified in the Fall of Rome, the destruction of the Old and the (symbolical) descent of the New Jerusalem. Nor do I think its interpretation even in detail attended with any insuperable difficulties.

It was once my intention to have translated the Apocalypse into verse, as a Poem, holding a mid place between the Epic Narrative and the Choral Drama: and to have annexed a Commentary in Prose. An intention long and fondly cherished, but during many years deferred from an unfeigned sense of my deficiency; and now there remains only the hope and the wish, or rather a feeling between both!

✓ sloth (*sophisma pigri*) should fail to check the bounty of the rich, there is still the sophistry of slander in reserve to chill the gratitude of the poor. If they cannot dissuade *the Liberal from devising liberal things*, they will at least blacken the motives of his beneficence. If they cannot close the hand of the giver, they will at least embitter the gift in the mouth of the receivers. Is it not as if they had said within their hearts: the sacrifice of charity has been offered indeed in despite of us; *but with bitter herbs shall it be eaten!* (Exod. xii. 8.) Imagined Wrongs shall make it distasteful. We will infuse vindictive and discontented fancies into minds, already irritable and suspicious from distress: till the fever of the heart shall coat the tongue with gall and spread wormwood on the palate?

However angrily our demagogues may disclaim all intentions of this kind, such has been their procedure, and it is susceptible of no other interpretation. We all know, that the shares must be scanty, where the dividend bears no proportion to the number of the claimants. Yet He, who satisfied the multitude in the wilderness with a few loaves and fishes, is still present to his church. Small

as the portions are, if they are both given and taken in the spirit of his commands, a Blessing will go with each; and *the handful of meal shall not fail, until the day when the Lord bringeth back plenty on the land.* But no Blessing can enter where Envy and Hatred are already in possession; and small good will the poor man have of the food prepared for him by his more favored Brother, if he have been previously taught to regard it as a mess of pottage given to defraud him of his Birth-right.

If then to promise medicine and to administer poison; if to flatter in order to deprave; if to affect love to all and shew pity to none; if to exaggerate and misderive the distress of the labouring classes in order to make them turbulent, and to discourage every plan for their relief in order to keep them so; if to skulk from private infamy in the mask of public spirit, and make the flaming patriot privilege the gamester, swindler or adulterer; if to seek amnesty for a continued violation of the laws of God by an equal pertinacity in outraging the laws of the land; if these characterize the hypocrite, we need not look far back or far round for faces, wherein to recognize the third striking

feature of this prophetic portrait ! When therefore the verifying facts press upon us in real life ; when we hear persons, the tyranny of whose will is the only law in their families, denouncing all law as tyranny in public—persons, whose hatred of power in others is in exact proportion to their love of it for themselves ; when we behold men of sunk and irretrievable characters, to whom no man would entrust his wife, his sister, or his purse, have the effrontory to propose that we should entrust to them our religion and our country ; when we meet with *Patriots*, who aim at an enlargement of the rights and liberties of the people by inflaming the populace to acts of madness that necessitate fetters—pretended heralds of freedom and actual pioneers of military despotism ; we will call to mind the words of the prophet Isaiah, and say to ourselves : this is no new thing under the Sun ! We have heard it with our own ears, and it was declared to our fathers, and in the old time before them, that one of the main characteristics of demagogues in all ages is, TO PRACTISE HYPOCRISY.

Such, I assert, has been the general line of conduct pursued by the political Empirics of the day : and your own recent experience will attest the truth of the assertion. It

was affirmed likewise at the same time, that as the conduct, such was the *process*: and I will seek no other support of this charge, I need no better test both of the men and their works, then the plain question: is there one good feeling, to which they do—is there a single bad passion, to which they do not appeal? If they are the enemies of liberty in general, inasmuch as they tend to make it appear incompatible with public quiet and personal safety, still more emphatically are they the enemies of the liberty of the PRESS in particular; and therein of all the truths human and divine which a free press is the most efficient and only commensurate means of protecting, extending and perpetuating. The strongest, indeed the only plausible, arguments against the education of the lower classes, are derived from the writings of these incendiaries; and if for our neglect of the light that hath been vouchsafed to us beyond measure, the land should be visited with a spiritual dearth, it will have been in no small degree occasioned by the erroneous and wicked principles which it is the trade of these men to propagate. Well therefore has the Prophet made it the fourth mark of these misleaders of the multitude, not alone to utter

error, but TO UTTER ERROR AGAINST THE LORD, TO MAKE EMPTY THE SOUL OF THE HUNGRY! Alas! it is a hard and a mournful thing, that the Press should be constrained to call out for the harsh curb of the law against the Press! for how shall the Law predistinguish the ominous screech owl from the sacred notes of Augury, from the auspicious and friendly birds of Warning? And yet will we avoid this seeming injustice, we throw down all fence and bulwark of public decency and public opinion. Already has political calumny joined hands with private slander, and every principle, every feeling, that binds the citizen to his country, the spirit to its Creator, is in danger of being undermined.—Not by reasoning, for from that there is no danger; but—by the mere habit of hearing them reviled and scoffed at with impunity. Were we to contemplate the evils of a rank and unweeded Press only in its effects on the manners of a people, and on the general tone of thought and conversation, the greater love we bore to literature, and to all the means and instruments of human improvement, the more anxiously should we wish for some Ithuriel spear that might remove from the ear of the ignorant and half-

learned, and expose in their own fiendish shape, those reptiles, which *inspiring venom and forging illusions as they list,*

— thence raise,
At least distemper'd discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires.

PARADISE LOST.

I feel, my friends! that even the strong and painful interest which, the peculiar state of the times, and almost the occurrences of the hour create, can scarcely counter-balance the wearisome aversion inspired by the deformity and *palpableness* of the subject itself. As the plan originates in the malignant restlessness of desperate ambition or desperate circumstances, so are its means and engines a *drag-net* of Fraud and Delusion. THE INSTRUMENTS ALSO OF THE CHURL ARE EVIL, HE DEVISETH WICKED DEVICES WITH LYING WORDS. He employs a compound poison, of which the following are the main ingredients, the proportions varying as the case requires or the wit of the poisoner suggests. It will be enough rapidly to name and number the components, as in a catalogue. 1. Bold, warm, and earnest assertions, it matters not whether supported by facts or no, nay, though

they should involve absurdities, and demonstrable impossibilities : ex. gr. that the amount of the sinecure places given by the executive power would suffice to remove all distress from the land. He is a bungler in the trade, and has been an indocile scholar of his dark master, the father of lies, who cannot make an assertion pass for a fact with an ignorant multitude. The natural generosity of the human heart which makes it an effort to doubt; the confidence which apparent courage inspires; and the contagion of animal enthusiasm; will ensure the belief. Even in large assemblies of men highly educated it is too often sufficient to place impressive images in juxta-position : and the constitutive forms of the mind itself aided by the power of habit will supply the rest. For we all *think* by causal connections. 2. Startling particular Facts, which, dissevered from their context, enable a man to *convey* falsehood while he *says* truth. 3. Arguments built on passing events and deriving an undue importance from the feelings of the moment. The mere appeal, however, to the auditors whether the arguments are not such that none but an idiot or an hireling could resist, is an effective substitute for any argument at all. For mobs have no memories.

They are in nearly the same state as that of an individual when he makes (what is termed) *a Bull*. The passions, like a fused metal, fill up the wide interstices of thought, and supply the defective links: and thus incompatible assertions are harmonized by the *sensation*, without the *sense*, of connection.

4. The display of defects without the accompanying advantages, or vice versa. 5. Concealment of the general and ultimate result behind the scenery of local, and particular consequences. 6. Statement of positions that are true only under particular conditions, to men whose ignorance or fury make them forget that these conditions are not present, or lead them to take for granted that they are. 7. Chains of Questions, especially of such questions as the persons best authorized to propose are ever the slowest in proposing; and objections intelligible of themselves, the answers to which require the comprehension of a system. 8. Vague and common-place Satyr, stale as the wine in which flies were drowned last summer, seasoned by the sly tale and important anecdote of but yesterday, that came within the speaker's own knowledge! 9. Transitions from the audacious charge, not seldom of as signal impu-

dencé “as any thing was ever carted for,” to the lie pregnant and interpretative: the former to prove the orator’s courage, and that he is neither to be bought or frightened; the latter to flatter the sagacity of the audience.

——— δηλός ἐστιν αὐτόθεν
Ἐν πανουργίᾳ τε καὶ θράσει καὶ κοβαλικέμασιν.

10. Jerks of style, from the lunatic trope, ῥήμαθ' ἵπποβάμονα, πολλὰς τε ἀλινδήθρας ἐπῶν, to the buffoonery and “red-lattice phrases” of the Canaglia, Σκῶρ συσκεδῶν βόρβορον τε πόλιν καὶ κακίας καὶ συκοφαντίας; the one in ostentation of superior rank and acquirements (for where envy does not interfere, man loves to *look up*;) the other in pledge of *heartiness* and good fellowship. 11. Lastly, and throughout all, to leave a general impression of something striking, *something that is to come of it*, and to rely on the indolence of mens’ understandings and the activity of their passions for their resting in this state, as the *brood-warmth* fittest to hatch whatever serpents’ egg opportunity may enable the Deceiver to place under it. Let but mysterious expressions * be

* Vide North’s Examen, p. 20; and The Knights of Aristophanes. A version of this comedy, abridged and modernized, would be a most seasonable present to the

aided by significant looks and tones, and you may cajole an hot and ignorant audience to believe any thing by saying nothing, and finally to act on the lie which they themselves have been drawn in to make. This is the Pharmacopœa of political empirics, here and everywhere, now and at all times ! These are the drugs administered, and the tricks played off by the Mountebanks and Zanies of Patriotism ; drugs that will continue to poison as long as Irreligion secures a predisposition to their influence ; and artifices, that like stratagems in war, are never the less successful for having succeeded a hundred times before. “ *They bend their tongues as a bow : they shoot out deceits as arrows : they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts : they cause the people to err by their dreams and their lightness : they make the people*

Public. The words quoted above from this Play and the Frogs, may be rendered freely in the order in which they occur : thus,

1. Thence he is illustrious, as a man of all waters, a bold fellow, and one who knows how to tickle the populace.

2. Phrases on horse-back, curvetting and careering words.

3. Scattering filth and dirt, malice and sycophantic tales.

vain, they feed them with wormwood, they give them the water of gall for drink; and the people love to have it so. And what is the end thereof? (JEREM. passim.)

The Prophet answers for me in the concluding words of the description—**TO DESTROY THE POOR EVEN WHEN THE NEEDY SPEAKETH ARIGHT**—that is, to impel them to acts that must end in their ruin by inflammatory falsehoods and by working on their passions till they lead them to reject the prior convictions of their own sober and unsophisticated understandings. As in all the preceding features so in this, with which the prophetic portrait is compleated, our own experience supplies both proof and example. The ultimate causes of the present distress and stagnation are in the Writer's opinion complex and deeply seated; but the immediate occasion is too obvious to be over-looked but by eyes at once red and dim through the intoxication of factious prejudice, that maddening spirit which pre-eminently deserves the title of *vinum dæmonum* applied by an ancient Father of the Church to a far more innocent phrenzy. It is demonstrable that taxes, the product of which is circulated in the Country from which they are raised, can never injure a Country.

directly by the mere amount; but either from the time or circumstances under which they are raised, or from the injudicious mode in which they are levied, or from the improper objects to which they are applied. The Sun may draw up the moisture from the river, the morass, and the ocean, to be given back in genial showers to the garden, the pasture and the cornfield; but it may likewise force upward the moisture from the fields of industry to drop it on the stagnant pool, the saturated swamp, or the unprofitable sand-waste. The corruptions of a system can be duly appreciated by those only who have contemplated the system in that ideal state of perfection exhibited by the reason: the nearest possible approximation to which under existing circumstances it is the business of the prudential understanding to realize. Those on the other hand, who commence the examination of a system by identifying it with its abuses or imperfections, degrade their understanding into the pander of their passions, and are sure to prescribe remedies more dangerous than the disease. Alas! there are so many real evils, so many just causes of complaint in the constitutions and administration of all governments, our own not excepted,

that it becomes the imperious duty of the true patriot to prevent, as much as in him lies, the feelings and efforts of his fellow country-men from losing themselves on a wrong scent.

If then we are to master the *Ideal* of a beneficent and judicious system of Finance as the preliminary to all profitable insight into the defects of any particular system in actual existence, we could not perhaps find an apter illustration than the gardens of southern Europe would supply. The tanks or reservoirs would represent the capital of a nation: while the hundred rills hourly varying their channels and directions, under the gardener's spade, would give a pleasing image of the dispersion of that capital through the whole population by the joint effect of taxation and trade. For taxation itself is a part of commerce, and the Government may be fairly considered as a great manufacturing-house, carrying on in different places, by means of its partners and overseers, the trades of the ship-builder, the clothier, the iron-founder, &c. &c. As long as a balance is preserved between the receipts and the returns of Government in their amount, quickness, and degree of dispersion; as long as the due proportion obtains in the sums levied to the mass

in productive circulation, so long does the wealth and circumstantial prosperity of the nation, (its wealth, I say, not its real welfare; its outward prosperity, but not necessarily its happiness) remain unaffected, or rather they will appear to increase in consequence of the additional stimulus given to the circulation itself by the reproductive action of all large capitals, and through the check which taxation, in its own nature, gives to the indolence of the wealthy in its continual transfer of property to the industrious and enterprizing. If different periods be taken, and if the comparative weight of the taxes at each be calculated, as it ought to be, not by the sum *levied on* each individual, but by the sum *left in his possession*, the settlement of the account will be in favor of the national wealth, to the amount of all the additional productive labor sustained or excited by the taxes during the intervals between their efflux and their re-absorption.

But on the other hand, in a direct ratio to this increase will be the distress produced by the disturbance of this balance, by the loss of this proportion; and the operation of the distress will be at least equal to the total amount of the difference between the taxes

still levied, and the quantum of aid withdrawn from individuals by the abandonment of others, and of that which the taxes, that still remain, have ceased to give by the altered mode of their re-dispersion. But to this we must add the number of persons raised and reared in consequence of the demand created by the preceding state of things, and now discharged from their occupations: whether the latter belong exclusively to the Executive Power, as that of soldiers, &c. or from those in which the labourers for the nation in general are already sufficiently numerous. Both these classes are thrown back on the Public, and sent to a table where every seat is pre-occupied. The employment lessens as the number of men to be employed is increased; and not merely in the same, but from additional causes and from the indirect consequences of those already stated, in a far greater ratio. For it may easily happen, that the very same change, which had produced this depression at home, may from equivalent causes have embarrassed the countries in commercial connection with us. At one and the same time the great customer at home wants less, and our customers abroad are able to buy less. The conjoint action of these cir-

cumstances will furnish, for a mind capable of combining them, a sufficient solution of the melancholy fact. They cannot but occasion much distress, much obstruction, and these again in their re-action are sure to be more than doubled by the still greater and universal alarm, and by the consequent check of confidence and enterprize, which they never fail to produce.

Now it is a notorious fact, that these causes did all exist to a very extraordinary degree, and that they all worked with united strength, in the late sudden transition from War to Peace. It was one among the many anomalies of the late War, that it acted, after a few years, as a universal stimulant. We almost monopolized the commerce of the world. The high wages of our artisans and the high prices of agricultural produce intercirculated. Leases of no unusual length not seldom enabled the provident and thrifty farmer to purchase the estate he had rented. Every where might be seen roads, rail-ways, docks, canals, made, making, and projected; villages swelling into towns, while the metropolis surrounded itself, and became (as it were) *set* with new cities. Finally, in spite of all the waste and havock of a twenty

years' war, the population of the empire was increased by more than two millions! The efforts and war-expenditure of the nation, and the yearly revenue, were augmented in the same proportion: and to all this we must add a fact of the utmost importance in the present question, that the war did not, as was usually the case in former wars, die away into a long expected peace by gradual exhaustion and weariness on both sides, but *plunged* to its conclusion by a concentration, we might almost say, by a *spasm* of energy, and consequently by an *anticipation* of our resources. We conquered by compelling *reversionary* power into alliance with our existing and natural strength. The first intoxication of triumph having passed over, this our "agony of glory," was succeeded, of course, by a general stiffness and relaxation. The antagonist passions came into play; financial solicitude was blended with constitutional and political jealousies, and both, alas! were exacerbated by personal imprudences, the chief injury of which consisted in their own tendency to disgust and alienate the public feeling. And with all this, the financial errors and prejudices even of the more educated classes, in short, the general want or imper-

fection of clear views and a scientific insight into the true effects and influences of Taxation, and the mode of its operation, became now a real misfortune, and opened an additional source of temporary embarrassment. Retrenchment could no longer proceed by cautious and calculated steps; but was compelled to hurry forward, like one who crossing the sands at too late an hour finds himself threatened by the inrush of the tide. Nevertheless, it was a truth susceptible of little less than mathematical demonstration, that the more, and the more suddenly, the Revenue was diminished by the abandonment of the war-taxes, the greater would be the disturbance of the Balance*: so that the agriculturist, the manufacturer, or the tradesman,

* The disturbance of this balance may be illustrated thus:—Suppose a great Capitalist to have founded, in a large market-town, a factory that gradually increasing employed at length from five to six hundred workmen; and that he had likewise a second factory at a distance from the former (in the Isle of Man, for instance) employing half that number, all of the latter having been drafted from and still belonging to the first Parish. After some years we may further suppose, that a large proportion of the housekeepers and tradespeople might have a running account with the Capitalist, many with him, as being their landlord, and still more for their stock. The workmen would in like manner be for the

(all in short but annuitants and fixed stipendiaries) who during the war having paid as Five had Fifteen left behind, would shortly

greater part on the books of the tradesfolks. As long as this state of things continued, all would go on well—nay, the town would be more prosperous with every increase of the factory. **THE BALANCE IS PRESERVED.** The circulations counterpoise each other, or rather they are neutralized by interfluence. But some sudden event leads or compels the Capitalist to put down both factories at once and with little or no warning; and to call in all the moneys owing to him, and which by law had the preference to all other debts.—What would be the consequence? The workmen are no longer employed, and cannot at once pay up their arrears to the tradesmen; and though the Capitalist should furnish the latter with goods at half price, and make the same abatement in their rent, these deductions would afford little present relief: while in the meantime the discharged workmen from the distant factory would fall back on the Parish, and increase the general distress. **THE BALANCE IS DISTURBED.**—Put the Country at large for the parishioners, and the Government in all departments of expenditure for the Capitalist and his factories: and nearly such is the situation in which we are placed by the transition from the late War to the present Peace. But the difference is this. The Town may never recover its temporary prosperity, and the Capitalist may spend his remaining fortune in another county; but a nation, of which the Government is an organic part with perfect interdependence of interests, can never remain in a state of depression thus produced, but by its own fault: that is, from moral causes.

have less than Ten after having paid but Two and a Half.

But there is yet another circumstance, which we dare not pass by unnoticed. In the best of times—or what the world calls such—the spirit of commerce will occasion great fluctuations, some falling while others rise, and therefore in all times there will be a large sum of individual distress. Trades likewise have their seasons, and at all times there is a very considerable number of artificers who are not employed on the average more than seven or eight months in the year : and the distress from this cause is great or small in proportion to the greater or less degree of dissipation and improvidence prevailing among them. But besides this, that artificial life and vigor of Trade and Agriculture, which was produced or occasioned by the direct or indirect influences of the late War, proved by no means innoxious in its effects. Habit and the familiarity with outward advantages, which takes off their *dazzle* ; sense of character ; and above all, the counterpoise of intellectual pursuits and resources ; are all necessary preventives and antidotes to the dangerous properties of wealth and power with the great majority of mankind.

It is a painful subject: and I leave to your own experience and recollection the assemblage of folly, presumption, and extravagance, that followed in the procession of our late unprecedented prosperity; the blind practices and blending passions of speculation in the commercial world, with the shoal of ostentatious fooleries and sensual vices which the sudden influx of wealth let in on our farmers and yeomanry. Now though the whole mass of calamity consequent on these aberrations from prudence should in all fairness be attributed to the sufferer's own conduct; yet when there supervenes some one common cause or occasion of distress which pressing hard on many furnishes a pretext to all, this too will pass muster among its actual effects, and assume the semblance and dignity of national calamity. Each unfortunate individual shares during *the hard times* in the immunities of a privileged order, as the most tottering and ruinous houses equally with those in best repair are included in the same brief after an extensive fire. The change of the moon will not produce a change of weather, except in places where the atmosphere has from local and particular causes been predisposed to its influence. But the former is one, placed

aloft and conspicuous to all men; the latter are many and intricate, and known to few. Of course it is the moon that must bear the entire blame of wet summers and scanty crops. All these, however, whether they are distresses common to all times alike, or though *occasioned* by the general revolution and stagnation, yet really *caused* by personal improvidence or misconduct, combine with its peculiar and inevitable effects in making the cup overflow. The latter class especially, as being in such cases always the most clamorous sufferers, increase the evil by swelling the alarm.

The principal part of the preceding explication, the main causes of the present exigencies are so obvious, and lay so open to the common sense of mankind, that the labouring classes saw the connection of the change in the times with the suddenness of the peace, as clearly as their superiors, and being less heated with speculation, were in the first instance less surprized at the results. To a public event of universal concern there will often be more attributed than belongs to it; but never in the natural course of human feelings will there be less. That the depression began *with* the Peace would have been

of itself a sufficient proof with the Many, that it arose *from* the Peace. But this opinion suited ill with the purposes of sedition. The truth, that could not be precluded, must be removed ; and “ *when the needy speaketh aright* ” the more urgent occasion is there for the “ *wicked device* ” and the “ *lying words.* ” Where distress is felt, tales of wrong and oppression are readily believed, to the sufferer’s own disquiet. Rage and Revenge make the cheek pale and the hand tremble, worse than even want itself : and the cup of sorrow overflows by being held unsteadily. On the other hand nothing calms the mind in the hour of bitterness so efficaciously as the conviction that it was not within the means of those above us, or around us, to have prevented it. An influence, mightier than fascination, dwells in the stern eye of Necessity, when it is fixed steadily on a man : for together with the *power* of resistance it takes away its agitations likewise. This is one mercy that always accompanies the visitations of the Almighty when they are received *as* such. If therefore the sufferings of the lower classes are to supply air and fuel to their passions, and are to be perverted into instruments of mischief, they must be attributed to

causes that can be represented as removeable; either to individuals who had been previously rendered unpopular, or to whole classes of men, according as the immediate object of their seducers may require. What, though nothing should be more remote from the true cause? What though the invidious charge should be not only without proof, but in the face of strong proof to the contrary? What though the pretended remedy should have no possible end but that of exasperating the disease? All will be of little or no avail, if these truths have not been administered beforehand. *When the wrath is gone forth, the plague is already begun: (Numbers, xvi. 46.) Wrath is cruel, and where is there a deafness like that of an outrageous multitude? For as the matter of the fire is, so it burneth. Let the demagogue but succeed in maddening the crowd, he may bid defiance to demonstration, and direct the madness against whom it pleaseth him. A slanderous tongue has disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation; strong cities hath it pulled down and overthrown the houses of great men. (Ecclesiasticus, xxviii. 14.)*

We see in every promiscuous public meeting the effect produced by the bold assertion

that the present hardships of all classes are owing to the number and amount of PENSIONS and SINE-CURES. Yet from the unprecedented zeal and activity in the education* of the

* With all due humility we contended that the war in question had likewise its *golden side*. The anomalous occasions and stupendous events of the contest had roused us, like the blast of a trumpet from the clouds; and as many as were capable of thinking were roused to thought. It had forced on the higher and middle classes—say rather on the people at large, as distinguished from the mere populace—the home truth, that national honesty and individual safety, private morals and public security, mutually grounded each other, that they were twined at the very root, and could not grow or thrive but in intertwine: and we of Great Britain had acquired this instruction without the stupifying influences of terror or actual calamity. Yet that it had operated practically, and in a scale proportional to the magnitude of the occasion, the late and present condition of manners and intellect among the young men at Oxford and Cambridge, the manly sobriety of demeanor, the submission to the routine of study in almost all, and the zeal in the pursuit of knowledge and academic distinction in a large and increasing number, afford a cheering testimony to such as were familiar with the state of the two Universities forty, or even thirty years ago, with the moral contrast which they presented, at the close of the last, and during the former half of the present reign; while a proof of still greater power, and open to the observation of all men, is supplied by the predominant anxiety concerning the education and principles of their children in all the

poor, of the thousands that are inflamed by, and therefore give credit to, these statements, there are few without a child at home, who could prove their impossibility by the first and simplest rules of arithmetic; there is not

respectable classes of the community, and the unexampled sale, in consequence, of the very numerous large and small volumes composed or compiled for the use of parents. Nor here did the salutary influence stop. We had been compelled to know and feel that the times in which we had to act or suffer were the saturnalia of revolution; and fearful evidence had been given us at the cost of our unfortunate neighbours, that a vicious and ignorant population was a magazine of combustibles left roofless, while madmen and incendiaries were letting off their new invented blue lights and fire-rockets in every direction. The wish sprang up and spread throughout England that every Englishman should be able to read his Bible, and have a Bible of his own to read. The general wish organized itself into act and plan: a discovery, the living educt of one great man's genius and benevolence, rendered the execution practicable and even easy; and the god-like idea began and is proceeding to realize itself with a rapidity yet steadfastness which nothing could make possible or credible but such a conviction effected by an experience so strange and awful, and acting on that volunteer spirit, that instinct of fervid yet orderly co-operation, which most of all our honourable characteristics distinguishes, secures, enriches, strengthens and elevates the people of Great Britain. [*From an Essay by the Author, published in the Courier, July, 1816.*]

one, perhaps, who taken by himself and in a cooler mood, would stand out against the simple question : whether it was not folly to suppose that the lowness of his wages, or his want of employment could be occasioned by the circumstance, that a sum (the whole of which, as far as it is raised by taxation, cannot take a yearly penny from him) was dispersed and returned into the general circulation by Annuity-holders of the Treasury instead of Annuity-holders of the Bank, by John instead of Peter : however blameable the regulation might be in other respects? What then? the hypothesis allows of a continual reference to *persons*, and to all the uneasy and malignant passions which personalities are of all means the best fitted to awaken. The *grief* itself, however grinding it may be, is of no avail to this end ; it must first be converted into a *grievance*. Were the audience composed chiefly of the lower Farmers and the Peasantry, the same circumstance would for the same reason have been attributed wholly to the Clergy and the system of TYTHES ; as if the corn would be more plentiful if the Farmers paid their whole rent to one man, instead of paying nine parts to the Landlords and the tenth to the Tythe-owners ! But let the meeting be composed of

the Manufacturing Poor, and then it is the MACHINERY of their Employers that is devoted to destruction: though it would not exceed the truth if I affirmed, that to the use and perfection of this very Machinery the majority of the poor deluded destroyers owe their very *existence*, owe to it that they ever beheld the light of heaven!

Even so it is with the Capitalists and Store-keepers, who by spreading the dearth of provisions over a larger space and time prevent scarcity from becoming real famine, the frightful lot at certain and not distant intervals of our less commercial forefathers. These men by the mere instinct of self-interest are not alone birds of warning, that prevent waste; but as the raven of Elijah, they bring supplies from afar. But let the incendiary spirit have rendered them birds of ill omen: and it is well if the deluded Malcontents can be restrained from levelling at them missiles more alarming than the curse of the unwise that alighteth not. *There be three things* (says the wise son of Sirach) *that mine heart feareth, the slander of a city, the gathering together of an unruly multitude, and a false accusation: all these are worse than death.* But all these are the Arena, and the chosen weapons of

demagogues. Wretches! they would without remorse detract the hope that is the subliming and expanding warmth of public credit, destroy the public credit that is the vital air of national industry, convert obstruction into stagnation, and make grass grow in the exchange and the market-place; if so they might but goad ignorance into riot, and fanaticism into rebellion! They would snatch the last morsel from the poor man's lips to make him curse the Government in his heart—alas! to fall at length, either ignominiously beneath the *strength* of the outraged Law, or (if God in his anger, and for the punishment of general depravity should require a severer and more extensive retribution) to perish still more lamentably among the victims of its *weakness*.

Thus then, I have answered at large to the first of the three questions proposed as the heads and divisions of this Address. I am well aware that our demagogues are not the only empirics who have tampered with the case. But I felt unwilling to put the mistakes of sciolism, or even those of vanity and self-interest, in the same section with crime and guilt. What is omitted here will find its place elsewhere; the more readily,

that having been tempted by the foulness of the ways to turn for a short space out of my direct path, I have encroached already on the second question; that, namely, which respects the ultimate causes and immediate occasions of the complaint.

The latter part of this problem I appear to myself to have solved fully and satisfactorily. To those who deem any further or deeper research superfluous, I must content myself with observing, that I have never heard it denied, that there is more than a sufficiency of food in existence. I have, at least, met with no proof, that there is, or has been any scarcity, either in the materials of all necessary comforts, or any lack of strength, skill and industry to prepare them. If we saw a man in health pining at a full table because there was not 'the savory meat there which he loved,' and had expected, the wanton delay or negligence of the messenger would be a compleat answer to our enquiries after the *occasion* of this sullenness or inappetence; but the *cause* of it we should be tempted to seek in the man's own undisciplined temper, or habits of self-indulgence. So far from agreeing therefore with those who find the causes in the occasions, I think the half of

the question already solved of very unequal importance with that which yet remains for solution.

The immediate occasions of the existing distress may be correctly given with no greater difficulty than would attend any other series of known historic facts; but toward the discovery of its true seat and sources, I can but offer a humble contribution. They appear to me, however, resolvable into the **OVERBALANCE* OF THE COMMERCIAL SPIRIT IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE ABSENCE OR WEAKNESS OF THE COUNTER-WEIGHTS**; this over-

* I entreat attention to the word, *over-balance*. My opinions would be greatly misinterpreted if I were supposed to think hostilely of the spirit of commerce to which I attribute the largest proportion of our actual freedom (i. e. as *Englishmen*, and not merely as *Land-owners*) and at least as large a share of our virtues as of our vices. Still more anxiously would I guard against the suspicion of a design to inculcate any number or class of individuals. It is not in the power of a minister or of a cabinet to say to the current of national tendency, stay here! or flow there! The excess can only be remedied by the slow progress of intellect, the influences of religion, and irresistible events guided by Providence. In the points even, which I have presumed to blame, by the word Government I intend all the directors of political power, that is, the great estates of the Realm, temporal and spiritual, and not only the Parliament, but all the elements of Parliament.

balance considered as displaying itself, 1. In the COMMERCIAL WORLD itself: 2. In the Agricultural: 3. In the Government: and, 4. In the combined Influence of all three on the more numerous and labouring Classes.

Of the natural counter-forces to the impetus of trade the first, that presents itself to my mind, is the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry, compared with our present self-complacent triumph over these supposed prejudices. Not that titles and the rights of precedence are pursued by us with less eagerness than by our Forefathers. The contrary is the case; and for this very cause, because they inspire less reverence. In the old times they were valued by the possessors and revered by the people as distinctions of *Nature*, which the crown itself could only ornament, but not give, Like the stars in Heaven, their influence was wider and more general, because for the mass of mankind there was no hope of reaching, and therefore no desire to appropriate, them. That many evils as well as advantages accompanied this state of things I am well aware: and likewise that many of the latter have become incompatible with far more important blessings. It would therefore be sickly affectation to suspend the thankfulness

due for our immunity from the one in an idle regret for the loss of the other. But however true this may be, and whether the good or the evil preponderated, still it acted as a counterpoise to the grosser superstition for wealth. Of the efficiency of this counter-influence we can offer negative proof only : and for this we need only look back on the deplorable state of Holland in respect of patriotism and public spirit at and before the commencement of the French revolution.

The limits and proportions of this address allow little more than a bare reference to this point. The same restraint I must impose on myself in the following. For under this head I include the general neglect of all the austerer studies ; the long and ominous eclipse of Philosophy ; the usurpation of that venerable name by physical and psychological Empiricism ; and the non-existence of a learned and philosophic Public, which is perhaps the only innoxious form of an imperium in imperio, but at the same time the only form which is not directly or indirectly encouraged. So great a risk do I incur of malignant interpretation, and the assertion itself is so likely to appear paradoxical even to men of candid minds, that I

should have passed over this point, most important as I know it to be ; but that it will be found stated more at large, with all its proofs, in a work on the point of publication. The fact is simply this. We have—*Lovers*, shall I entitle them ? Or must I not rather hazard the introduction of their own phrases, and say, *Amateurs* or *Dillettanti*, as Musicians, Botanists, Florists, Mineralogists, and Anti-quarians. Nor is it denied that these are ingenuous pursuits, and such as become men of rank and fortune. Neither in these or in any other points do I complain of any excess in the pursuits themselves ; but of that which arises from the deficiency of the counterpoise. The effect is the same. Every work, which can be made use of either to immediate profit or immediate pleasure, every work which falls in with the desire of acquiring wealth suddenly, or which can gratify the senses, or pamper the still more degrading appetite for scandal and personal defamation, is sure of an appropriate circulation. But neither Philosophy or Theology in the strictest sense of the words, can be said to have even a public *existence* among us. I feel assured, that if Plato himself were to return and renew his sublime lucubrations in

the metropolis of Great Britain, a handicraftsman, from a laboratory, who had just succeeded in disoxydating on Earth, would be thought far the more respectable, nay, the more illustrious person of the two. Nor will it be the least drawback from his honors, that he had never even asked himself, what law of universal Being Nature uttered in this phænomenon: while the character of a visionary would be the sole remuneration of the man, who from the insight into that law had previously demonstrated the necessity of the fact. As to that which passes with us under the name of metaphysics, philosophic elements, and the like, I refer every man of reflection to the contrast between the present times and those shortly after the restoration of ancient literature. In the latter we find the greatest men of the age, Statesmen, Warriors, Monarchs, Architects, in closest intercourse with philosophy. I need only mention the names of Lorenzo the magnificent; Picus, Count Mirandula, Ficinus and Politian; the abstruse subjects of their discussion, and the importance attached to them, as the requisite qualifications of men placed by Providence as guides and governors of their fellow-creatures. If this be undeniable, equally no-

torious is it that at present the more effective a man's talents are, and the more likely he is to be useful and distinguished in the highest situations of public life, the earlier does he shew his aversion to the metaphysics and the books of metaphysical speculation, which are placed before him: though they come with the recommendation of being so many triumphs of modern good sense over the schools of ancient philosophy. Dante, Petrarch, Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, Algernon Sidney, Milton and Barrow were Platonists. But all the men of genius, with whom it has been my fortune to converse, either profess to know nothing of the present systems, or to despise them. It would be equally unjust and irrational to seek the solution of this difference in the men; and if not, it can be found only in the philosophic systems themselves. And so in truth it is. The *Living* of former ages communed gladly with a life-breathing philosophy. The *Living* of the present age wisely leave the dead to take care of the dead.

But whatever the causes may be, the result is before our eyes. An excess in our attachment to temporal and personal objects can be counteracted only by a pre-occupation

of the intellect and the affections with permanent, universal, and eternal truths. Let no man enter, said Plato, who has not previously disciplined his mind by Geometry. He considered this science as the first purification of the soul, by abstracting the attention from the accidents of the senses. We too teach Geometry ; but that there may be no danger of the pupil's, becoming too *abstract* in his conceptions, it has been not only proposed, but the proposal has been adopted, that it should be taught by *wooden* diagrams ! It pains me to remember with what applause a work, that placed the inductions of modern Chemistry in the same rank with the demonstrations of Mathematical Science, was received even in a mathematical University. I must not permit myself to say more on this subject, desirous as I am of shewing the importance of a philosophic class, and of evincing that it is of vital utility, and even an essential element in the composition of a civilized community. It must suffice, that it has been explained in what respect the pursuit of Truth for its own sake, and the reverence yielded to its professors, has a tendency to calm or counteract the pursuit of wealth ; and that there-

fore a counterforce is wanting wherever Philosophy is degraded in the estimation of society. What are *you* (a philosopher was once asked) in consequence of your admiration of these abstruse speculations? He answered: What I am, it does not become me to say; but what thousands are, who despise them, and even pride themselves on their ignorance, I see—and tremble!

There is a third influence, alternately our spur and our curb, without which all the pursuits and desires of man must either exceed or fall short of their just measure. Need I add, that I mean the influence of Religion? I speak of that sincere, that entire interest, in the undivided faith of Christ which demands the first-fruits of the whole man, his affections no less than his outward acts, his understanding equally with his feelings. For be assured, never yet did there exist a full faith in the divine WORD, (by whom not Immortality alone, but *Light* and Immortality were brought into the world) which did not expand the intellect while it purified the heart; which did not multiply the aims and objects of the mind, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions. If acquiescence with-

out insight; if warmth without light; if an immunity from doubt given and guaranteed by a resolute ignorance; if the habit of taking for granted the words of a catechism, remembered or forgotten; if a sensation of *positiveness* substituted—I will not say, for certainty; but—for that calm assurance, the very means and conditions of which it supersedes; if a belief that seeks the darkness, and yet strikes no root, immovable as the limpet from its rock, and like the limpet fixed there by mere force of adhesion; if these suffice to make us Christians, in what intelligible sense could our Lord have announced it as the height and consummation of the signs and *miracles* which attested his Divinity, that the Gospel was preached to the Poor? In what sense could the Apostle affirm, that Believers have received, not indeed the wisdom of this world that comes to nought, but the wisdom of God, that we might know and comprehend the things that are freely given to us of God? or that every Christian, in proportion as he is indeed a Christian, has received the Spirit that *searcheth* all things, yea the deep things of God himself?—on what grounds could the Apostle denounce even the sincerest fervor of spirit as defective, where it does not bring

forth fruits in the *Understanding*? * Or again: if to believe were enough, why are we commanded by another Apostle, that, “besides this, giving all diligence we should add to our faith manly energy and to manly energy *knowledge*!” Is it not especially significant, that in the divine œconomy, as revealed to us in the New Testament, the peculiar office of Redemption is attributed to the WORD, that is, to the *intelligential* wisdom which from all eternity is with God, and is God? that in *him* is life, and the life is the *light* of men?

In the present day we hear much, and from men of various creeds, of the *plainness* and *simplicity* of the Christian religion: and a strange abuse has been made of these words, often indeed with no ill intention, but still oftener by men who would fain transform the necessity of believing in Christ into a recommendation to believe him. The advocates of the latter scheme grew out of a sect that were called Socinians, but having succeeded in disbelieving far beyond the last foot-marks of the Socini, have chosen to de-

* Brethren! be not children in understanding: howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

signate themselves by the name of *Unitarians*. But this is a word, which in its proper sense, can belong only to their antagonists: for *Unity* or *Unition*, and indistinguishable *Unicity* or *Oneness*, are incompatible terms: while, in the exclusive sense in which they mean the name to be understood, it is a presumptuous boast, and an uncharitable calumny. Their true designation, which simply expresses a fact admitted on all sides, would be that of *Psilanthropists*,* or assertors of the *mere* humanity of Christ. It is the interest of these men to speak of the Christian religion as comprized in a few plain doctrines, and containing nothing not intelligible, at the first hearing, to men of the narrowest capacities. Well then, (it might be replied) we are disposed to place a full

* New things justify new terms. *Novis in rebus licet nova nobis verba confingere.*—We never speak of the *unity* of Attraction, or of the unity of Repulsion; but of the unity of Attraction and Repulsion in each one corpuscle. The essential diversity of the ideas, unity and sameness, was among the elementary principles of the old Logicians; and the sophisms grounded on the confusion of these terms have been ably exposed by Leibnitz, in his Critique on Wissowatius, the acutest, perhaps, of all the learned Socinian divines, when Socinian divines were undeniably men of learning.

reliance on the veracity of the great Founder of the Christian Religion, and likewise,—which is more than you yourselves are on all occasions willing to admit—on the accuracy and competence of the Writers, who first recorded his acts and sayings. We have learned from you, *whom*,—and we now wish to hear from you—*what* we are to believe. The answer is:—the actual occurrence of an extraordinary event, as recorded by the biographers of Jesus, in confirmation of doctrines, without the *previous* belief of which, no man would, or rather, according to St. Paul's declaration, *could* become a convert to Christianity ; doctrines, which it is certain, that Christ's immediate disciples believed, not less confidently before they had acknowledged his mission, than they did afterwards. Religion and politics, they tell us, require but the application of a common sense, which every man possesses, to a subject in which every man is concerned. “ To be a musician, an orator, a painter, or even a good mechanic, presupposes *genius* ; to be an excellent artizan or mechanic requires more than an average degree of *talent* ; but to be a legislator or a theologian, or both at once, demands nothing

but common sense."* Now we willingly admit that nothing can be necessary to the salvation of a Christian which is not in his power. For such, therefore, as have neither the opportunity or the capacity of learning more, sufficient, doubtless, will be the belief of those plain truths, and the fulfilment of those commands, which to be incapable of understanding, is to be a man in appearance only. But even to this scanty creed the *disposition* of faith must be added: and let it not be forgotten, that though nothing can be easier than to understand a code of belief, four-fifths of which consists in avowals of disbelief, and the remainder in truths, concerning which (in this country at least) a man must have *taken pains to learn* to have any doubt; yet it is by no means easy to reconcile this code of negatives with the declarations of the Christian Scripture. On the contrary, it requires all the resources of verbal criticism,

* THE FRIEND, Vol. I. As the original work, of which but a small number of copies were printed on stamped sheets, and sent to the subscribers by the post, is not to be procured; the reference is made to the edition now printing, in three volumes, of the size of the British Essayists: if indeed a work, a great part of which is new in substance, and the whole in form and arrangement, can be described as an edition of the former.

and all the perverse subtlety of special pleading, to work out a plausible semblance of correspondency between them. It must, however, be conceded, that a man may consistently spare himself the trouble of the attempt, and leave the New Testament unread, after he has once thoroughly persuaded himself that it can teach him nothing of any real importance that he does not already know. St. Paul indeed thought otherwise. For though he too teaches us, that in the religion of Christ there is milk for babes ; yet he informs us at the same time, that there is meat for strong men ! and to the like purpose one of the Fathers has observed, that in the New Testament there are shallows where the lamb may ford, and depths where the elephant must swim. The Apostle exhorts the followers of Christ to the continual study of the new religion, on the ground that in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, and in the riches of Christ which no research could exhaust, there were contained all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom. Accordingly, in that earnestness of spirit, which his own personal experience of the inspired truth, he prays with a solemn and a ceremonious fervor, that

being "strengthened with might in the inner man, they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height," of that living Principle, at once the Giver and the Gift! of that anointing Faith, which in endless evolution "*teaches us of all things, and is truth!*" For all things are but parts and forms of its progressive manifestation, and every new knowledge but a new organ of sense and insight into this one all-inclusive Verity, which, still filling the vessel of the understanding, still dilates it to a capacity of yet other and yet greater Truths, and thus makes the soul feel its poverty by the very amplitude of its present, and the immensity of its reversionary, wealth. All truth indeed is simple, and needs no extrinsic ornament. And the more profound the truth is, the more simple: for the whole labour and building-up of knowledge is but one continued process of simplification. But I cannot comprehend, in what ordinary sense of the words the properties of *plainness* and *simplicity* can be applied to the Prophets, or to the Writings of St. John, or to the Epistles of St. Paul; or what can have so marvellously improved the capacity of *our* laity beyond the same

class of persons among the primitive Christians; who, as we are told by a fellow apostle, found in the Writings last-mentioned many passages hard to be understood, which the *unlearned*, as well as the unstable, were in danger of wresting and misinterpreting. I can well understand, however, what is and has been the practical consequence of this notion. It is this very consequence, indeed, that occasioned the preceding remarks, makes them pertinent to my present subject, and gives them a place in the train of argument requisite for its illustration. For what need of any after-recurrence to the sources of information concerning a religion, the whole contents of which can be thoroughly acquired at once, and in a few hours? An occasional *remembrancing* may, perhaps, be expedient; but what object of *study* can a man propose to himself in a matter of which he knows all that can be known, all at least, that it is of use to know? Like the first rules of arithmetic, its few plain and obvious truths may hourly serve the man's purposes, yet never once occupy his thoughts. But it is impossible that the affections should be kept constant to an object which gives no employment to the understanding. The energies of the intellect, in-

crease of insight, and enlarging views, are necessary to keep alive the substantial faith in the heart. They are the appointed fuel to the sacred fire. In the state of *Perfection* all other faculties may, perhaps, be swallowed up in love; but it is on the wings of the *Cherubim*, which the ancient Hebrew Doctors interpreted as meaning the powers and efforts of the Intellect, that we must first be borne up to the "pure Empyrean": and it must be Seraphs and not the hearts of poor Mortals, that can burn unfuelled and self-fed. "Give me *understanding* (exclaimed the royal Psalmist) and I shall observe thy law with my whole heart. Teach me *knowledge* and good *judgment*. Thy commandment is exceeding *broad*: O how I love thy law! it is my *meditation* all the day. The entrance of thy words giveth *light*, it giveth *understanding* to the simple. I prevented the dawning of the morning: mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate upon thy word." Now where the very contrary of this is the opinion of many, and the practice of most, what results can be expected but those which are actually presented to us in our daily experience?

There is one class of men* who read the Scriptures, when they do read them, in order to pick and choose their faith; or (to speak more accurately) for the purpose of plucking

* Whether it be on the increase, as a Sect, is doubtful. But it is admitted by all—nay, strange as it may seem, made a matter of boast,—that the number of its secret adherents, outwardly of other denominations, is ten-fold greater than that of its avowed and incorporated Followers. And truly, in our cities and great manufacturing and commercial towns, among Lawyers and such of the Tradesfolk as are the ruling members in Book-clubs, I am inclined to fear that this has not been asserted without good ground. For Socinianism in its present form, consisting almost wholly in attack and imagined detection, has a particular charm for what are called *shrewd, knowing* men. Besides, the vain and half-educated, whose christian and sir names in the title pages of our Magazines, Lady's Diaries, &c. are the successors of the shame-faced Critos, Phileleutheroses, and Philaletheses in the time of our Grandfathers, will be *something*: and now that Deism has gone out of fashion, Socinianism has swept up its Refuse. As the main success of this sect is owing to the small proportion which the affirmative articles of their Faith (*rari rantes in gurgite vasto*) bear to the negative, (that is, their Belief to their Disbelief) it will be an act of kindness to the unwary to bring together the former under one point of view. This is done in the following Catalogue, the greater part if not the whole of which may be authenticated from the writings of Mr. Belsham.

away *live-asunder*, as it were, from the divine organism of the Bible, textuary morsels and fragments for the support of doctrines which they had learned beforehand from the higher

1. They believe in one God, professing to differ from other Christians only in holding the Deity to be unipersonal, the Father alone being God, the Son a mere, though an inspired and highly gifted, man; and the Holy Spirit either a Synonyme of God, or of the divine agency, or of its effects.

2. They believe men's actions necessitated, and consistently with this affirm that the Christian Religion (i. e. *their* view of it) precludes all *remorse* for our sins, they being a present calamity, but not *guilt*.

3. They believe the Gospels, though not written by inspiration, to be authentic Histories on the whole: though with some additions and interpolations. And on the authority of these Writings, confirmed by other evidence, they believe in the Resurrection of the Man, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

4. On the historic credibility of this event they believe in the Resurrection of the Body, which in their opinion is the Whole Man, at the last Day: and differ from other Churches in this only, that while other Christians believe, that all Men will arise in the Body, they hold, that all the Bodies that had been Men, will arise.

5. A certain indefinite number of Mankind thus renewed to life and consciousness, it is the common belief of *them all*, will be placed in a state of happiness and immortality. But with respect to those who have died in the calamitous condition of unreformed Sinfulness, (to what extent it is for the supreme Judge to de-

oracle of their own natural Common-Sense. *Sanctas Scripturas frustant ut frustrent.* Through the gracious dispensations of Providence a complexity of circumstances may

cide) they are divided among themselves. The one party teach, that such unhappy persons will be raised only to be re-annihilated: the other party contend, that there will be a *final* Restoration of all Men, with a purgatory or state of remedial discipline, the severity and duration of which will be proportioned to the kind, degree, and obstinacy of the Disease, and of which therefore every Man is left to his own conjectural Hopes and Fears: with this comfort however to the very worst, (i. e. most *unfortunate* and *erroneous* of Mankind) that it will be all well with them at last. In this article they differ from the Papists, in having no Hell, and in placing their Purgatory *after*, instead of before, the Day of Judgment.

6. Lastly, as they hold only an intellectual and physical, and not a *moral* difference in the actions and characters of Men, they not being free Agents, and therefore not more *responsible* Beings than the brute Beasts, although their greater powers of memory and comparison render them more susceptible of being *acted on* by prospective motives—(and in *this* sense they retain the *term*, responsibility, after having purified it by the ex-inanition of its old, and the transfusion of a new, meaning)—and as they, with strict consequence, merge all the attributes of Deity in Power, Intelligence, and Benevolence, (Mercy and Justice being modes, or rather perspective views, of the two latter; the Holiness of God meaning the same or nothing at all; and his Anger,

co-operate as antidotes to a noxious principle, and realize the paradox of a very good man under a very evil faith. It is not denied, that a Socinian may be as honest, useful and bene-

Offence, and Hatred of Moral Evil, being mere metaphors and figures of speech addressed to a rude and barbarous People) they profess to hold a Redemption—not however by the Cross of Christ, except as his death was an evidence of his sincerity, and the necessary preliminary to his Resurrection; but—by the effects which this fact of his Resurrection, together with his example, and his re-publication of the moral precepts (taught indeed long before, but as *they* think, not so clearly, by Moses and the Prophets) were calculated to produce on the human mind. So that if it had so happened, that a man had been influenced to an innocent and useful life by the example, precepts, and martyrdom of Socrates, Socrates and not Christ, would have been his Redeemer.

These are all the Positives of the modern Socinian Creed, and even these it was not possible to extricate wholly from the points of Disbelief. But if it should be asked, why this resurrection, or re-creation is confined to the human animal, the answer must be—that more than this has not been revealed. And so far all Christians will join assent. But some have added, and in my opinion much to their credit, that they hope, it may be the case with the Brutes likewise, as they see no sufficient reason to the contrary. And truly, upon *their* scheme, I agree with them. For if Man be no other or nobler Creature *essentially*, than he is represented in their system, the meanest reptile, that maps out its path on the earth by lines of slime, must be of equal worth

volent a character as any of his neighbours ; and if he *thinks* more and derives a larger portion of his pleasures from intellectual sources, he is likely to be more so. But in such

and respectability, not only in the sight of the Holy One, but by a strange contradiction even before Man's own reason. For remove all the sources of Esteem and the Love founded on esteem, and whatever else pre-supposes a Will and, therein, a possible transcendence to the material world : Mankind, as far as my experience has extended, (and I am less than the least of many whom I could cite as having formed the very same Judgment) are *on the whole* distinguished from the other Beasts incomparably more to their *disadvantage*, by Lying, Treachery, Ingratitude, Massacre, Thirst of Blood, and by Sensualities which both in sort and degree it would be libelling their Brother-beasts to call *bestial*, than to their advantage by a greater extent of Intellect. And what indeed, abstracted from the Free-will, could this intellect be but a more shewy instinct ? of more various application indeed, but far less secure, useful, or adapted to its purposes, than the instinct of Birds, Insects, and the like. In short, as I have elsewhere observed, compared with the wiles and factories of the Spider, or with the cunning of the Fox, it would be but a more efflorescent, and for that very cause a less efficient, *Salt* to preserve the Hog from putrifying before its destined hour.

Well may the words of Isaiah be applied and addressed to the Teachers and Followers of this Sect, or rather, I would say, to their Tenets as personified—
“ The word of the Lord was unto them, precept upon,

instances, and I am most willing to bear witness from my own experience, that they are not infrequent, the fruit is from the grafts not from the tree. The native produce is, or would be, an intriguing, overbearing, scornful and worldly disposition; and in point of fact, it is the only scheme of Religion that inspires in its adherents a contempt for the understandings of all who differ from them. But be this as it may, and whatever be its effects, it is not probable that Christianity will have any *direct* influence on men who pay it no other compliment than that of calling by its name the previous dictates and decisions of their own mother-wit.

But the more numerous class is of those who do not trouble themselves at all with religious matters, which they resign to the clergyman of the parish. But while not a

précept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and spared. Wherefore, hear the word of the Lord, ye *Scornful Men* that rule this people! Because ye have said, *We have made a covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at agreement!* Your Covenant with Death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand. For your Bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."—Isaiah xxviii.

few among these men consent to pray and hear by proxy; and while others, more attentive to the prudential advantages of a decorous character, yield the customary evidence of their church-membership; but, this performed, are at peace with themselves, and

think their Sunday's task

As much as God or Man can fairly ask;

there exists amongst the most respectable Laity of our cities and great towns, an active, powerful, and enlarging minority, whose industry, while it enriches their families, is at the same time a support to the revenue, and not seldom enlivens their whole neighbourhood: men whose lives are free from all disreputable infirmities, and of whose activity in the origination, patronage, and management both of charitable and of religious associations, who must not have read or heard? and who that has, will dare deny to be most exemplary? After the custom of our forefathers, and their pure household religion,* these, in so many respects estimable persons, are for the greater part in

* And pure Religion breathing Household laws.

WORDSWORTH.

the habit of having family-prayer, and a portion of Scripture read every morning and evening. In this class, with such changes or substitutions as the peculiar tenets of the sect require, we must include the sensible, orderly and beneficent Society of the FRIENDS, more commonly called Quakers. Here then, if any where, (that is, in any *class* of men; for the present argument is not concerned with individuals) we may expect to find Christianity tempering commercial avidity and sprinkling its holy damps on the passion of accumulation. This, I say, we might expect to find, if an undoubting belief in the threats and promises of Revelation, and a consequent regularity of personal, domestic, and social demeanor, sufficed to constitute that Christianity, the power and privilege of which is so to renew and irradiate the whole intelligential and moral life of man, as to overcome the *spirit of the world*. (St. John: Epistle I.) If this, the appointed test, were found wanting, should we not be forced to apprehend, nay, are we not compelled to infer, that the spirit of prudential motive, however ennobled by the magnitude and awfulness of its objects,*

* And in this alone the late Dr. Paley, by a use of terms altogether arbitrary, places the distinction between

and though as the termination of a lower, it may be the commencement (and not seldom the *occasion*) of an higher state, is not, even in respect of *morality* itself, that abiding and continuous principle of action, which is either *one* with the faith spoken of by St. Paul, or its

Prudence and Virtue, the former being Self-love in its application to the sum of pain and pleasure that is likely to result to us, as the consequence of our actions, in the present life only ; while the latter is the same Self-love, that together with the present consequences of our actions, takes in likewise the more important enjoyments or sufferings which, according as we obey or disobey His known commands, God has promised to bestow, or threatened to inflict, on us in the Life to come. According to this writer, it becomes the duty of a rational free agent (it would be more pertinent to say, of a sentient animal capable of Forecast) to reduce his Will to an habitual coincidence with his Reason, on no other ground, but because he believes that God is able and determined either to gratify or to torment him. Thus, the great principle of the Gospel, that we are bound to love our neighbours as ourselves and God above all, must, if translated into a consistency with this theory of enlightened Self-love, run thus : On the ground of our fear of torment and our expectation of pleasure from an infinitely powerful Being, we are under a prudential obligation of acting towards our neighbours *as if* we loved them equally with ourselves ; but ultimately and in very truth to love ourselves only. And this is the Work, this the System of moral and political Philosophy cited as highest authority in our Senate and Courts of Judicature ! And

immediate offspring. It cannot be that *spirit* of obedience to the commands of Christ, by which the soul dwelleth in him, and he in it: (1 John, c. iii. 4.) and which our Saviour himself announces as a *being born again*. And this indispensable act, or influence, or impregnation, of which, as of a divine tradition, the eldest philosophy is not silent; which flashed through the darkness of the pagan mysteries; and which it was therefore a reproach to a Master in Israel, that he had not already known; (John's Gospel, c. iii.)—this is elsewhere explained, as a seed which, though of gradual developement, did yet *potentially* contain the essential form not merely of a better, but of an *other* life: amidst all the frailties and

(still worse!) this is the Text-Book for the moral Lectures at one of our Universities, justly the most celebrated for scientific ardor and manly thinking. 'Tis not without a pang of filial sorrow, that the Writer makes this acknowledgement, which nothing could have *extorted* from him but the strongest conviction of the mischievous and debasing tendencies of that wide-spread system, in which the Works of Dr. Paley (his Sermons excepted) act not the less pernicious part, because the most decorous and plausible. The fallacious sophistry of the grounding principle in this whole system has been detected by Des Cartes, and Bishop Butler: and of late years, with great ability and originality, by Mr. W. HAZLITT.

transient eclipses of mortality making, I repeat, the subjects of this regeneration not so properly better as *other* men, whom therefore the world could not but hate, as aliens. Its own native growth, however, improved by cultivation (whether thro' the agency of blind sympathies, or of an intelligent self-interest, the utmost heights to which the *worldly life* can ascend) the World has always been ready and willing to acknowledge and admire. *They are of the world: therefore speak they out of the heart of the world* (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου) *and the world heareth them.* (1 John, ivth.)

To abstain from acts of wrong and violence, to be moreover industrious, useful, and of seemly bearing, are qualities presupposed in the gospel code, as the preliminary conditions, rather than the proper and peculiar effects, of Christianity. But they are likewise qualities so palpably indispensable to the temporal interests of mankind that, if we except the brief frenzies of revolutionary Riot, there never was a time, in which the World did not profess to reverence them: nor can we state any period, in which a more than ordinary character for assiduity, regularity, and charitableness did not secure the World's praise and favor, and were not calculated to

advance the individuals own worldly interests : provided only, that his manners and professed tenets were those of some known and allowed body of men.

I ask then, what is the fact? We are—and, till it's good purposes, which are many, have been all atchieved, and we can become something better, long may we continue such! —a busy, enterprizing, and commercial nation. The habits attached to this character must, if there exist no adequate counterpoise, inevitably lead us, under the specious names of utility, practical knowledge, and so forth, to look at all things thro' the medium of the market, and to estimate the Worth of all pursuits and attainments by their marketable value. In this does the Spirit of Trade consist. Now would the general experience bear us out in the assertion, that amid the absence or declension of all other antagonist Forces, there is found in the very circle of the trading and opulent themselves, in the increase, namely, of religious professors among them, a spring of resistance to the excess of the commercial impetus, from the impressive example of *their* unworldly feelings evidenced by *their* moderation in worldly pursuits? I fear, that we may anticipate the answer wherever the

religious zeal of such professors does not likewise manifest itself by the glad devotion of as large a portion of their Time and Industry, as the duty of providing a fair competence for themselves and their families leaves at their own disposal, to the comprehension of those inspired writings and the evolution of those pregnant truths, which are proposed for our earnest, sedulous research, in order that by occupying our understandings they may more and more assimilate our affections? I fear, that the inquiring traveller would more often hear of zealous Religionists who have read (and as a duty too and with all due acquiescence) the prophetic, "Wo to them that join house to house and lay field to field, that they may be alone in the land!" and yet find no object deform the beauty of the prospect from their window or even from their castle turrets so annoyingly, as a meadow not their own, or a field under ploughing with the beam-end of the plough in the hands of its humble owner! I fear, that he must too often make report of men lawful in their dealings, scriptural in their language, alms-givers, and patrons of Sunday schools, who are yet resistless and overawing Bidders at all Land Auctions in their neighbourhood, who live in

the center of farms without leases, and tenants without attachments! Or if his way should lie through our great towns and manufacturing districts, instances would grow cheap with him of wealthy religious practitioners, who never travel for orders without cards of edification in prose and verse, and small tracts of admonition and instruction, all "plain and easy, and suited to the meanest capacities;" who pray daily, as the first act of the morning and as the last of the evening, Lead us not into temptation! but deliver us from evil! and employ all the interval with an edge of appetite keen as the scythe of Death in the pursuit of yet more and yet more of a temptation so perilous, that (as they have full often read, and heard read, without the least questioning, or whisper of doubt) no power short of Omnipotence could make their deliverance from it credible or conceivable. Of all denominations of Christians, there is not one in existence or on record whose whole scheme of faith and worship was so expressly framed for the one purpose of spiritualizing the mind and of abstracting it from the vanities of the world, as the Society of Friends! not one, in which the church members are connected, and their professed principles enforced, by so effective

and wonderful a form of discipline. But in the zeal of their Founders and first Proselytes for perfect Spirituality they excluded from their system all ministers specially trained and educated for the ministry, with all Professional Theologians: and they omitted to provide for the raising up among themselves any other established class of learned men, as teachers and schoolmasters for instance, in their stead. Even at this day, though the Quakers are in general remarkably shrewd and intelligent in all worldly concerns, yet learning, and more particularly theological learning, is more rare among them in proportion to their wealth and rank in life, and held in less value, than among any other known sect of Christians. What has been the result? If the occasion permitted, I could dilate with pleasure on their decent manners and decorous morals, as individuals, and their exemplary and truly illustrious philanthropic efforts as a Body. From all the gayer and tinsel vanities of the world their discipline has preserved them, and the English character owes to their example some part of its manly plainness in externals. But my argument is confined to the question, whether Religion in its present state and under the present concep-

tions of its demands and purposes does, even among the most religious, exert any efficient force of controul over the commercial spirit; the excess of which we have attributed not to the extent and magnitude of the commerce itself, but to the absence or imperfection of its appointed checks and counteragents. Now as the system of the Friends in its first intention is of all others most hostile to worldly-mindedness on the one hand; and as, on the other, the adherents of this system both in confession and *practice* confine Christianity to feelings and motives; they may be selected as representatives of the strict, but unstudied and uninquiring, Religionists of every denomination. Their characteristic propensities will supply, therefore, no unfair test for the degree of resistance, which our present Christianity is capable of opposing to the cupidity of a trading people. That species of Christianity I mean, which, as far as knowledge and the faculties of thought are concerned,—which, as far as the growth and grandeur of the *intellectual* man is in question—is to be learnt *ex tempore*! A Christianity poured in on the Catechumen all and all at once, as from a shower-bath: and which, whatever it may be in the heart, yet for the understanding and reason is from boy-

hood onward a thing past and perfected! If the almost universal opinion be tolerably correct, the question is answered. But I by no means *appropriate* the remark to the wealthy Quakers, or even apply it to them in any particular or eminent sense, when I say, that often as the motley reflexes of my experience move in long procession of manifold groups before me, the distinguished and world-honored company of Christian Mammonists appear to the eye of my imagination as a drove of camels heavily laden, yet all at full speed, and each in the confident expectation of passing through the EYE OF THE NEEDLE, without stop or halt, both beast and baggage.

Not without an uneasy reluctance have I ventured to tell the truth on this subject, lest I should be charged with the indulgence of a satirical mood and an uncharitable spleen. But my conscience bears me witness, and I know myself too near the grave to trifle with its name, that I am solely actuated by a sense of the *exceeding* importance of the subject at the present moment. I feel it an awful duty to exercise the honest liberty of free utterance in so dear a concernment as that of preparing my country for a change in its external relations, which must come sooner or later; which

I believe to have already commenced ; and that it will depend on the presence or absence of a corresponding change in the *mind* of the nation, and above all in the aims and ruling opinions of our gentry and moneyed men whether it is to cast down our strength and prosperity, or to fix them on a firmer and more august basis. " Surely to every good and peaceable man it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands ; but when God commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say and what he shall conceal."

That my complaints, both in this and in my former Lay Sermon, concerning the same errors, are not grounded on any peculiar notions of mine, the following remarks of a great and good man, not less illustrious for his piety and fervent zeal as a Christian than for his acuteness and profundity as a Philosopher, may, perhaps, be accepted as proof.

" Prevailing studies, he observes, are of no small consequence to a state, the religion, manners, and civil government of a country ever taking some bias from its philosophy, which affects not only the minds of its professors and students, but also the opinions of

all the better sort, and the practice of the whole people, remotely and consequentially indeed, though not inconsiderably. Have not the doctrines of Necessity and Materialism; with the consequent denial of men's responsibility, of his corrupt and fallen nature, and of the whole scheme of Redemption by the incarnate Word gained ground during the general passion for the Corpuscularian and Experimental Philosophy which hath prevailed about a century? This indeed might usefully enough have employed some share of the leisure and curiosity of inquisitive persons. But when it entered the seminaries of Learning, as a necessary accomplishment and as the most important part of knowledge, by engrossing men's thoughts and fixing their minds so much on corporeal objects, it hath, however undesignedly, not a little indisposed them for spiritual, moral, and intellectual matters. Certainly, had the philosophy of Pythagoras and Socrates prevailed in this age, we should not have seen interest take so general and fast hold on the minds of men. But while the employment of the mind on things purely intellectual is to most men irksome, whereas the sensitive powers by our constant use of them, acquire strength, the

objects of sense are too often counted the chief good. For these things men fight, cheat, and scramble. Therefore, in order to tame mankind and introduce a sense of virtue, *the best human means is to exercise their understanding*, to give them a glimpse of a world superior to the sensible; and while they take pains to cherish and maintain the animal life, to teach them not to neglect the intellectual.

It might very well be thought serious trifling to tell my readers that the greatest men had ever an high esteem for Plato; whose writings are the touchstone of an hasty and shallow mind; whose philosophy, the admiration of ages, supplied patriots, magistrates and law-givers to the most flourishing states, as well fathers to the Church, and doctors to the Schools. In these days the depths of that old learning are rarely fathomed: *and yet it were happy for these lands, if our young nobility and gentry instead of modern maxims would imbibe the notions of the great men of antiquity.* But in these free-thinking times, many an empty head is shook at Aristotle and Plato: and the writings of these celebrated ancients are by most men treated on a level with the dry and barbarous lucubrations of the Schoolmen. It may, however, be

modestly presumed that there are not many among us, even of those that are called the better sort, who have more sense, virtue, and love of their country than Cicero, who in a letter to Atticus could not forbear exclaiming, *O Socrates et Socratici Viri! nunquam vobis gratiam referam.* Would to God, many of our countrymen had the same obligations to those Socratic writers. Certainly, where the people are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best learnt from the writings of Plato. But among a people void of discipline and a gentry devoted to vulgar cares and views, Plato, Pythagoras, and Aristotle themselves, were they living, could do but little good."

Thus then, of the three most approved antagonists to the Spirit of Barter, and the accompanying disposition to overvalue Riches with all the Means and Tokens thereof—of the three fittest and most likely checks to this tendency, namely, the feeling of ancient birth and the respect paid to it by the community at large; a genuine intellectual Philosophy with an accredited, learned, and philosophic *Class*; and lastly, Religion; we have found the first declining, the second not existing, and the third efficient, indeed, in many re-

spects and to many excellent purposes, only not in this particular direction : the Religion here spoken of, having long since parted company with that inquisitive and bookish Theology which tends to defraud the student of his worldly wisdom, inasmuch as it diverts his mind from the accumulation of wealth by pre-occupying his thoughts in the acquisition of knowledge. For the Religion of best repute among us holds all the truths of Scripture and all the doctrines of Christianity so very transcendent, or so very easy, as to make study and research either vain or needless. It professes, therefore, to hunger and thirst after Righteousness alone, and the rewards of the Righteous ; and thus habitually *taking for granted* all truths of spiritual import leaves the understanding vacant and at leisure for a thorough insight into present and temporal interests : which, doubtless, is the true reason why its followers are in general such shrewd, knowing, wary, well-informed, thrifty and thriving men of business. But this is likewise the reason, why it neither does or can check or circumscribe the Spirit of Barter ; and to the consequent *monopoly* which this commercial Spirit possesses, must its over-balance be attributed, not to the extent or magnitude of the Commerce itself.

Before I enter on the result assigned by me as the chief ultimate *cause* of the present state of the country, and as the main *ground* on which the immediate occasions of the general distress have worked, I must entreat my Readers to reflect that the spirit of Trade has been a thing of insensible growth; that whether it be enough, or more or less than enough, is a matter of relative, rather than of positive determination; that it depends on the degree in which it is aided or resisted by all the other tendencies that co-exist with it; and that in the best of times this spirit may be said to live on a narrow isthmus between a sterile desert and a stormy sea, still threatened and encroached on either by the Too Much or the Too Little. As the argument does not depend on any precise accuracy in the dates, I shall assume it to have commenced, as an influencing part of the national character, with the institution of the Funds in the reign of William the Third, and from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, to have been hurrying onward to its maximum, which it seems to have attained during the late war. The short interruptions may be well represented as a few steps backward, that it might leap forward with an additional momentum. The words, old and modern, now and then,

are applied by me, the latter to the whole period since the Revolution, and the former to the interval between this epoch and the Reformation; the one from 1460 to 1680, the other from 1680 to the present time.

Having premised this explanation, I can now return an intelligible answer to a question, that will have risen in the Reader's mind during his perusal of the last three or four pages. How, it will be objected, does all this apply to the present times in particular? When was the industrious part of mankind *not* attached to the pursuits most likely to reward their industry? Was the wish to make a fortune or, if you prefer an invidious phrase, the lust of lucre, less natural to our forefathers than to their descendants? If you say, that though a not less frequent, or less powerful passion with them than with us, it yet met with a more frequent and more powerful check, a stronger and more advanced boundary-line, in the Religion of old times, and in the faith, fashion, habits, and authority of the Religious: in what did this difference consist? and in what way did these points of difference act? If indeed the antidote in question once possessed virtues which it no longer possesses, or not in the same

degree, what is the ingredient, either added, omitted, or diminished since that time, which can have rendered it less efficacious now than then?

Well! (I might reply) grant all this: and let both the profession and the professors of a spiritual principle, as a counterpoise to the worldly weights at the other end of the Balance, be supposed much the same in the one period as in the other! Assume for a moment, that I can establish neither the fact of its lesser efficiency, nor any points of difference capable of accounting for it! Yet it might still be a sufficient answer to this objection, that as the commerce of the country, and with it the spirit of commerce, has increased fifty-fold since the commencement of the latter period, it is not enough that the counterweight should be as great as it was in the former period: to remain the same in its effect, it ought to have become very much greater. But though this be a consideration not less important than it is obvious, yet I do not purpose to rest in it. I affirm, that a difference may be shewn, and of no trifling importance as to that one point, to which my present argument is confined. For let it be remembered, that it is not to any extraordinary

influences of the religious principle that I am referring, not to voluntary poverty, or sequestration from social and active life, or schemes of mortification. I speak of Religion merely as I should of any worldly object, which, as far as it employs and interests a man, leaves less room in his mind for other pursuits: except that this must be more especially the case in the instance of Religion, because beyond all other Interests it is calculated to occupy the whole mind, and employ successively all the faculties of man; and because the objects which it presents to the Imagination as well as to the Intellect cannot be actually contemplated, much less can they be the subject of frequent meditation, without dimming the lustre and blunting the rays of all rival attractions. It is well known, and has been observed of old, that Poetry tends to render its devotees* careless of money and outward appearances, while

* *Hic error tamen et levis hic insania quantas
Virtutes habeat, sic collige: vatis avarus
Non temere est animus; versus amat, hoc studet unum;
Detrimenta, fugas servorum, incendia ridet;
Non fraudem socio, puerove incogitat ullam
Pupillo; vivit siliquis et pane secundo:
Militiæ quanquam piger et malus, utilis urbi.*

HORAT. EPIST. II. 1.

Philosophy inspires a contempt of both as objects of Desire or Admiration. But Religion is the Poetry and Philosophy of all mankind; unites in itself whatever is most excellent in either, and while it at one and the same time calls into action and supplies with the noblest materials both the imaginative and the intellective faculties, superadds the interests of the most substantial and home-felt reality to both, to the poetic vision and the philosophic idea. But in order to produce a similar effect it must act in a similar way: it must reign in the thoughts of a man and in the powers akin to thought, as well as exercise an admitted influence over his hopes and fears, and through these on his deliberate and individual acts.

Now as my first presumptive proof of a difference (I might almost have said, of a contrast) between the religious character of the period since the Revolution, and that of the period from the accession of Edward the Sixth to the abdication of the second James, I refer to the Sermons and to the theological Works generally, of the latter period. It is my full conviction, that in any half dozen Sermons of Dr. Donne, or Jeremy Taylor, there are more thoughts, more facts

and images, more excitements to inquiry and intellectual effort, than are presented to the congregations of the present day in as many churches or meetings during twice as many months. Yet both these were the most popular preachers of their times, were heard with enthusiasm by crowded and promiscuous Audiences, and the effect produced by their eloquence was held in reverential and affectionate remembrance by many attendants on their ministry, who, like the pious Isaac Walton, were not themselves men of learning or education. In addition to this fact, think likewise on the large and numerous editions of massy, closely printed folios : the impressions so large and the editions so numerous, that all the industry of destruction for the last hundred years has but of late sufficed to make them rare. From the long list select those works alone, which we know to have been the most current and favorite works of their day : and of these again no more than may well be supposed to have had a place in the scantiest libraries, or perhaps with the Bible and Common Prayer Book to have *formed* the library of their owner. Yet on the single shelf so filled we should find almost every possible question, that

could interest or instruct a reader whose whole heart was in his religion, discussed with a command of intellect that seems to exhaust all the learning and logic, all the historical and moral relations, of each several subject. The very length of the discourses, with which these "rich souls of wit and knowledge" fixed the eyes, ears, and hearts of their crowded congregations, are a source of wonder now-a-days, and (we may add) of self-congratulation, to many a sober christian, who forgets with what delight he himself has listened to a two hours' harangue on a Loan or Tax, or at the trial of some remarkable cause or culprit. The transfer of the interest makes and explains the whole difference. For though much may be fairly charged on the revolution in the *mode* of preaching as well as in the matter, since the fresh morning and fervent noon of the Reformation, when there was no need to visit the conventicles of fanaticism in order to

See God's ambassador in the pulpit stand,
Where they could take notes from his Look and Hand ;
And from his speaking *action* bear away
More sermon than our preachers use to *say* ;

yet this too must be referred to the same

change in the habits of men's minds, a change that involves both the shepherd and the flock : though like many other *Effects*, it tends to reproduce and strengthen its own cause.

The last point, to which I shall appeal, is the warmth and frequency of the religious controversies during the former of the two periods ; the deep interest excited by them among all but the lowest and most ignorant classes ; the importance attached to them by the very highest ; the number, and in many instances the transcendent merit, of the controversial publications—in short, the rank and value assigned to *polemic divinity*. The subjects of the controversies may or may not have been trifling ; the warmth, with which they were conducted, may have been disproportionate and indecorous ; and we may have reason to congratulate ourselves that the age, in which we live, is grown more indulgent and less captious. The fact is introduced not for its own sake, but as a *symptom* of the general state of men's feelings, as an evidence of the direction and main channel, in which the thoughts and interests of men were then flowing. We all know, that lovers are apt to take offence and wrangle with each other on occasions that perhaps are but trifles, and

which assuredly would appear such to those who had never been under the influence of a similar passion. These quarrels may be no proofs of wisdom ; but still in the imperfect state of our nature the entire absence of the same, and this too on far more serious provocations, would excite a strong suspicion of a comparative *indifference* in the feelings of the parties towards each other, who can love so coolly where they profess to love so well. I shall believe our present religious tolerancy to proceed from the abundance of our charity and good sense, when I can see proofs that we are equally cool and forbearing, as Litigators and political Partizans. And I must again intreat my reader to recollect, that the present argument is exclusively concerned with the requisite correctives of the commercial spirit, and with Religion therefore no otherwise, than as a counter-charm to the sorcery of wealth : and my main position is, that neither by reasons drawn from the nature of the human mind, or by facts of actual experience, are we justified in expecting this from a religion which does not employ and actuate the understandings of men, and combine their affections with it as a system of Truth gradually and progressively manifest-

ing itself to the intellect; no less than as a system of motives and moral commands learnt as soon as heard, and containing nothing but what is plain and easy to the lowest capacities. Hence it is, that Objects, the ostensible principle of which I have felt it my duty to oppose (vide the STATESMAN'S MANUAL, p. 50.) and objects, the which and the measures for the attainment of which possess my good wishes and have had the humble tribute of my public advocacy and applause—I am here alluding to the British and Foreign Bible Society—may yet converge, as to the point now in question. They may, both alike, be symptoms of the same predominant disposition to that Coalition-system in Christianity, for the expression of which Theologians have invented or appropriated the term, *Syncretism*.* although the former may be an ominous, the latter an auspicious symptom,

* *Clementia Evangelica* (writes a German Theologian of the last Century) quasi matrona habenda est, purioris doctrinae custos, mitis quidem, at sedula tamen, at vigilans, at seductorum impatiens. Iste vero Syncretismus, quem Laodiceni apud nos tantopore collaudant, nusquam a me nisi meretrix audiet, Fidei vel pignae vel status sui ignare proles, postea autem indolis secularis genetrix, et quaecum nec sincera fides, nec genuina Caritas commorari feret.

Translation.—The true Gospel Spirit of Toleration

though the one may be worse from Bad, while the other is an instance of Good educed from Evil. Nay, I will dare confess, that I know not how to think otherwise, when I hear a Bishop of an established Church publicly exclaim (and not viewing it as a lesser inconvenience to be endured for the attainment of a far greater good, but as a thing desirable and to be preferred for its own sake) *No Notes! No Comment! Distribute the Bible and the Bible only among the Poor!*—a declaration, which from any lower quarter I should have been under the temptation of attributing either to a fanatical notion of immediate illumination superseding the necessity of human teaching, or to an ignorance of difficulties which (and what more worthy?) have *successfully* employed all the learning, sagacity, and unwearied labors of great and wise men,

we should regard as a Matron, a kind and gentle guardian indeed of the pure Doctrine, but sedulous, but vigilant, but impatient of Seducers. This SYNCRETISM on the contrary, which the Loadiceans among us join in extolling so highly, shall no where hear from me other or better name than that of Harlot, the offspring of a Belief either slothful or ignorant of its own condition, and then the parent of Worldly-mindedness, and with whom therefore neither sincere Faith nor genuine Charity will endure to associate.

and eminent servants of Christ, during all the ages of Christianity, and will doubtless continue to yield new fruits of Knowledge and Insight to a long series of Followers.*

Though an overbalance of the commercial

* I am well aware, that by these open avowals, that with much to honor and praise in many, there is something to correct in all, parties, I shall provoke many enemies and make never a friend. If I *dared* abstain, how gladly should I have so done! Would that the candid part of my Judges would peruse or re-peruse the affecting and most eloquent introductory pages of Milton's Second Book of his "Reason of Church Government urged, &c.:" and give me the credit, which (my conscience bears me witness) I am entitled to claim, for all the *moral* feelings expressed in that exquisite passage. The following paragraph I extract from a volume of my own, which has been long printed, for the greater part, and which will, I trust, now be soon published.

"All my experience from my first entrance into life to the present hour is in favor of the warning maxim, that the man who opposes in toto the political or religious zealots of his age, is safer from their obloquy than he who differs from them in any one or two points or perhaps only in degree. By that transfer of the feelings of private life into the discussions of public questions, which is the *queen bee* in the hive of party fanaticism, the partizan has more sympathy with an intemperate opposite than with a moderate Friend. We now enjoy an intermission and long may it continue! In addition to far higher and more important merits, our present bible

spirit is involved in the deficiency of its counterweights ; yet the facts, that exemplify the mode and extent of its operation, will afford a more direct and satisfactory kind of proof. And first I am to speak of this overbalance as displayed in the commercial world itself. But as this is the first, so is it for my present purpose the least important point of view. A portion of the facts belonging to this division of the subject I have already noticed, p. 34, 35 ; and for the remainder let the following suffice as the substitute or representative. The moral of the tale I leave to the Reader's

societies, and other numerous associations for national or charitable objects, may serve perhaps to carry off the superfluous activity and fervor of stirring minds in innocent hyperboles and the bustle of management. But the poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may for a season have subsided to its roots. At least, let us not be lulled into such a notion of our entire security, as not to keep watch and ward, even on our best feelings. I have seen gross intolerance shewn in support of toleration ; sectarian antipathy most obtrusively displayed in the promotion of an undistinguishing comprehension of sects ; and acts of cruelty (I had almost said) of treachery, committed in furtherance of an object vitally important to the cause of humanity ; and all this by men too of naturally kind dispositions and exemplary conduct."—*Biographia Literaria, or Sketches of my Literary Life, and Opinions*, p. 190.

own reflections. Within the last sixty years or perhaps a somewhat larger period, (for I do not pretend to any nicety of dates, and the documents are of easy access) there have occurred at intervals of about 12 or 13 years each, certain periodical Revolutions of Credit. Yet Revolution is not the precise word. To state the thing as it is, I ought to have said, certain gradual expansions of credit ending in sudden contractions, or, with equal propriety, ascensions to a certain utmost possible height, which has been different in each successive instance; but in every instance the attainment of this, its *ne plus ultra*, has been instantly announced by a rapid series of explosions (in mercantile language, a *Crash*) and a consequent precipitation of the general system. For a short time this Icarian*

* "Icarus, Son of Dædalus, who flying with his father from Crete flew too high, whereby the Sun melting his waxen wings he fell into the Sea, from him named the Icarian Sea."—AINSWORTH. By turning back to the word, Dædalus, the Reader will find such a striking and ingenious allegory of the Manufacturing System, its connections with a forced or contraband Trade, and its successful evasions of what has been lately called the *continental system*, as may induce him to forgive the triteness and school-boy character which all allusions of this sort have at first sight for a sensible mind.

Credit, or rather this illegitimate offspring of CONFIDENCE, to which it stands in the same relation as Phæthon to his parent god in the old fable, seems to lie stunned by the fall ; but soon recovering, again it strives upward, and having once more regained its mid region,

— thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious !

PARADISE LOST.

till at the destined zenith of its vaporous exaltation, "*all unawares, fluttering its pennons vain, plumb down it drops !*" Or that I may descend myself to the "cool element of prose," Alarm and suspicion gradually diminish into a judicious circumspectness ; but by little and little, circumspection gives way to the desire and emulous ambition of *doing business* ; till Impatience and Incaution on one side, tempting and encouraging headlong Adventure, Want of principle, and Confederacies of false credit on the other, the movements of Trade become yearly gayer and giddier, and end at length in a vortex of hopes and hazards, of blinding passions and blind practices, which should have been left where alone they ought

ever to have been found, among the wicked lunacies of the Gaming Table.

I am not ignorant that the power and circumstantial prosperity of the Nation has been increasing during the same period, with an accelerated force unprecedented in any country, the population of which bore the same proportion to its productive soil: and partly, perhaps, even in consequence of this system. By facilitating the *means* of enterprize it must have called into activity a multitude of enterprizing Individuals and a variety of Talent that would otherwise have lain dormant: while by the same ready supply of excitements to Labor, together with its materials and instruments, even an unsound credit has been able within a short time to * substantiate itself.

* If by the display of forged Bank Notes a Speculator should establish the belief of his being a Man of large fortune, and gain a temporary confidence in his own paper-money; and if by large wages so paid he should stimulate a number of indolent Highlanders to bring a track of waste land into profitable cultivation, the promissary Notes of the Owner, which derived their first value from a delusion, would end in representing a real property, and this their own product. A most improbable case! In its accidental features, I reply, rather than in its essentials. How many thousand acres have been reclaimed from utter unproductiveness, how many doubled

We shall perhaps be told too, that the very Evils of this System, even the periodical *crash* itself, are to be regarded but as so much superfluous steam ejected by the Escape Pipes and Safety Valves of a self-regulating Machine: and lastly, that in a free and trading country *all things find their level*.

I have as little disposition as motive to recant the principles, which in many forms and through various channels I have labored to propagate; but there is surely no inconsistency in yielding all due honor to the spirit of Trade, and yet charging sundry evils, that weaken or reverse its blessings, on the over-balance of that spirit, taken as the paramount principle of action in the Nation at large. Much I still concede to the arguments for the present

in value, by the agency of notes issued beyond the bona fide Capital of the Bank or Firm that circulated them, or at best on Capital afloat and insecure.

In this section of the present address, I consider myself as having redeemed a promise, made by me (November 1809) in the Essay "On vulgar errors concerning Taxation." Having demonstrated the favourable influences of the system "on our political strength and *circumstantial* prosperity," THE FRIEND added the following pledge: "What have been its *injurious* effects on our Literature, Morals, and Religious Principles, I shall hereafter develope with the same boldness."

scheme of Things, as adduced in the preceding paragraph : but I likewise see, and always have seen, much that needs winnowing. Thus instead of the position, that all things *find*, it would be less equivocal and far more descriptive of the fact to say, that Things are always *finding*, their level: which might be taken as the paraphrase or ironical definition of a storm, but would be still more appropriate to the Mosaic Chaos, ere its brute tendencies had been enlightened by the WORD (i. e. the communicative Intelligence) and before the Spirit of Wisdom* moved on the *level-finding* Waters. But Persons are not *Things*—but Man does not find his level. Neither in body nor in soul does the Man find his level! After a hard and calamitous season, during which the thousand Wheels of some vast manufactory had remained silent as a frozen water-fall, be it that plenty has returned and that Trade has once more become brisk and stirring: go, ask the overseer, and question the parish doctor, whether the workman's health and temperance with

* *Σοφία*, Wisdom, (that is, Reason in Act or Energy) was the name by which the Christians and Christian Writers of the three first Centuries most commonly addressed and distinguished the Holy Ghost.

the staid and respectful Manners best taught by the inward dignity of conscious self-support, have found *their* level again! Alas! I have more than once seen a group of children in Dorsetshire, during the heat of the dog-days, each with its little shoulders up to its ears, and its chest pinched inward, the very habit and *fixtures*, as it were, that had been impressed on their frames by the former ill-fed, ill-clothed, and unfuelled winters. But as with the Body, so or still worse with the Mind. Nor is the effect confined to the laboring classes, whom by an ominous but too appropriate a change in our phraseology we are now accustomed to call the Laboring Poor. I cannot persuade myself, that the frequency of Failures with all the disgraceful secrets of Fraud and Folly, of unprincipled Vanity in expending and desperate Speculation in retrieving, can be familiarized to the thoughts and experience of Men, as matters of daily occurrence, without serious injury to the Moral Sense: more especially in times when Bankruptcies spread, like a fever, at once contagious and epidemic; swift too as the travel of an Earthquake, that with one and the same chain of Shocks opens the ruinous chasm in cities that have an ocean between them!

in times, when the Fate flies swifter than the Fear, and yet the report, that follows the flash, has a ruin of its own and arrives but to multiply the Blow!—when princely capitals are often but the Telegraphs of distant calamity: and still worse, when no man's treasure is safe who has adopted the ordinary means of safety, neither the high or the humble; when the Lord's rents and the Farmer's store, entrusted perhaps but as yesterday, are asked after at closed doors!—but worst of all, in its moral influences as well as in the cruelty of suffering, when the old Laborers' Savings, the precious robberies of self-denial from every day's comfort; when the Orphan's Funds; the Widow's Livelihood; the fond confiding Sister's humble Fortune; are found among the victims to the remorseless mania of dishonest Speculation, or to the desperate cowardice of Embarrassment, and the drunken stupor of a usurious Selfishness that for a few months respite dares incur a debt of guilt and infamy, for which the grave itself can plead no statute of limitation. Name to me any Revolution recorded in History, that was not followed by a depravation of the national Morals. The Roman character during the Triumvirate, and under Tiberius; the reign of Charles the Second;

and Paris at the present moment; are obvious instances. What is the main cause? The sense of Insecurity. On what ground then dare we hope, that with the same accompaniment Commercial Revolutions should not produce the same effect, in proportion to the extent of their sphere?

But these Blessings—with all the specific terms, into which this most comprehensive Phrase is to be resolved? Dare we unpack the bales and cases so marked, and look at the articles, one by one? Increase of human Life and increase of the means of Life are, it is true, reciprocally cause and effect: and the Genius of Commerce and Manufactory has been the cause of both to a degree that may well excite our *wonder*. But do the last results justify our exultation likewise? Human Life, alas! is but the malleable Metal, out of which the thievish Picklock, the Slave's Collar, and the Assassin's Stiletto are formed as well as the clearing Axe, the feeding Plough-share, the defensive Sword, and the mechanic Tool. But the subject is a painful one: and fortunately the labors of others, with the communications of medical men concerning the state of the manufacturing Poor, have rendered it unnecessary. I will rather (though in strict

method it should, perhaps, be reserved for the following Head) relate a speech made to me near Fort Augustus, as I was travelling on foot through the Highlands of Scotland. The Speaker was an elderly and respectable widow, who expressed herself with that simple eloquence, which strong feeling seldom fails to call forth in humble life, but especially in women. She spoke English, as indeed most Highlanders do who speak it at all, with a propriety of phrase and a discrimination of tone and emphasis that more than compensated for the scantiness of her vocabulary. After an affecting account of her own wrongs and ejection, (which however, she said, bore with comparative lightness on her, who had had saved up for her a wherewithal to live, and was blessed with a son well to do in the world), she made a movement with her hand in a circle, directing my eye meanwhile to various objects as marking its outline : and then observed, with a deep sigh and a suppressed and slow voice which she suddenly raised and quickened after the first drop or cadence— Within this space—how short a time back ! there lived a hundred and seventy-three persons : and now there is only a shepherd, and an underling or two. Yes, Sir ! One hun-

dred and seventy-three Christian souls, man, woman, boy, girl, and babe; and in almost every home an old man by the fire-side, who would tell you of the troubles, before our roads were made; and many a brave youth among them who loved the birth-place of his forefathers, yet would swing about his broadsword and want but a word to march off to the battles over sea; aye Sir, and many a good lass, who had a respect for herself! Well! but they are gone, and with them the bristled bear,* and the pink haver,† and the potatoe plot that looked as gay as any flower garden with its blossoms! I sometimes fancy, that the very birds are gone, all but the crows and the gleads! Well, and what then? Instead of us all, there is one shepherd man, and it may be a pair of small lads—and a many, many sheep! And do you think, Sir! that God allows of such proceedings?

Some days before this conversation, and while I was on the shores of the Loch Katherne,‡ I had heard of a sad counterpart to the

* A species of Barley.

† A species of Oats.

‡ The Lake so widely celebrated since then by a Poet, to whose writings a larger number of persons have owed a larger portion of innocent, refined, and heart-bettering

widow's tale, and told with a far fiercer indignation, of a "Laird who had raised a company from the country round about, for the love that was borne to his name, and who gained high preferment in consequence: and that it was but a small part of those that he took away whom he brought back again. And what were the thanks which the folks had both for those that came back with him, some blind and more in danger of blindness; and for those that had perished in the hospitals, and for those that fell in battle, fighting before or beside him? Why, that their fathers were all turned out of their farms before the year was over, and sent to wander like so many gipsies, unless they would consent to shed their gray hairs, at ten-pence a day, over the new canals. Had there been a price set upon his head, and his enemies had been coming upon him, he needed but have whistled, and a hundred brave lads would have made a wall of flame round about him with the flash of their broad-swords! Now if the ——— should

amusement, than perhaps to any favorite of the Muses recorded in English literature: while the most learned of his readers must feel grateful for the mass of interesting and highly instructive information scattered throughout his works, in which respect SOUTHEY is his only rival.

come among us, as (it is said) they will, let him whistle to his sheep and see if *they* will fight for him!" The frequency with which I heard, during my solitary walk from the end of Loch-Lomond to Inverness, confident expectations of the kind expressed in his concluding words—nay, far too often eager hopes mingled with vindictive resolves—I spoke of with complaint and regret to an elderly man, whom by his dress and way of speaking, I took to be a schoolmaster. Long shall I recollect his reply: "O, Sir, it kills a man's love for his country, the hardships of life coming by change and with injustice!" I was sometime afterwards told by a very sensible person who had studied the mysteries of political œconomy, and was therefore entitled to be listened to, that more food was produced in consequence of this revolution, that the mutton must be eat somewhere, and what difference where? If three were fed at Manchester instead of two at Glenco or the Trossacs, the balance of human enjoyment was in favor of the former. I have passed through many a manufacturing town since then, and have watched many a group of old and young, male and female, going to, or returning from, many a factory, but I could

never yet persuade myself to be of his opinion. Men, I still think, ought to be weighed not counted. Their *worth* ought to be the final estimate of their value.

Among the occasions and minor causes of this change in the views and measures of our Land-owners, and as being itself a consequent on that system of credit, the outline of which was given in a preceding page, the universal practice of enhancing the sale price of every article on the presumption of Bad Debts, is not the least noticeable. Nor, if we reflect that this additional per centage is repeated at each intermediate stage of its elaboration and distribution from the Grower or Importer to the last Retailer *inclusively*, will it appear the least operative. Necessary, and therefore justifiable, as this plan of reprisal by anticipation may be in the case of each individual dealer, yet taken collectively and without reference to persons, the plan itself would, I suspect, startle an unfamiliarized conscience, as a sort of non-descript Piracy, not promiscuous in its exactions only because by a curious anomaly it grants a free pass to the offending party. Or if the Law maxim, *volentibus nulla fit injuria*, is applicable in this case, it may perhaps be described more courteously as

a *Benefit Society* of all the careful and honest men in the kingdom to pay the debts of the dishonest or improvident. It is mentioned here, however, as one of the appendages to the twin paramount causes, the Paper Currency and the National Debt, and for the sake of the conjoint results. Would we learn what these results are? What they have been in the higher, and what in the most numerous, class of society? Alas! that some of the intermediate rounds in the social ladder have been broken and not replaced, is itself one of these results. Retrace the progress of things from 1792 to 1813, when the tide was at its height, and then, as far as its rapidity will permit, the ebb from its first turn to the dead low-water mark of the last quarter. Then see whether the remainder may not be generalized under the following heads. Fluctuation in the wages of labor, alternate privation and excess (not in all at the same time, but successively in each) consequent improvidence, and over all discontent and a system of factious confederacy—these form the history of the mechanics and lower ranks of our cities and towns. In the country, a peasantry sinking into pauperism, step for step with the rise of the farmer's profits and indulgencies.

On the side of the landlord and his tenants, we shall find the presence of the same causes attested by answerable effects. Great as "their almost magical effects" * on the increase of prices were in the necessaries of life, they were still greater, disproportionally greater, in all articles of shew and luxury. With few exceptions, it soon became difficult, and at length impracticable, for the gentry of the land, for the possessors of fixed property to retain the rank of their ancestors, or their own former establishments, without joining in the general competition under the

* During the composition of this sheet I have had, and availed myself of the opportunity of perusing the Report of the Board of Agriculture for the year 1816. The numerous reflections, which this most extraordinary volume excited in my mind, I cannot even touch on, in this closing sheet of an Address that has already extended far beyond my original purpose. But had I perused it at the commencement, I should still have felt it my duty to direct the main force of my animadversions against the Demagogue class of State-empirics. I was not indeed, ignorant of the aid, which they derived from other quarters:—nor am I now ashamed of not having anticipated its extent. There is, however, one communication (p. 208 to 227) from Mr. Mosely, from which, with the abatement only of the passage on tythes, I cannot withhold my entire admiration. It almost redeems the remainder of the Report.

influence of the same trading spirit. Their dependants were of course either selected from, or driven into, the same eddy; while the temptation of obtaining more than the legal interest for their principal became more and more strong with all persons who, neither trading nor farming, had lived on the interest of their fortunes. It was in this latter class that the rash, and too frequently, the unprincipled projector found his readiest dupes. Had we but the secret history of the *building* speculations only in the vicinity of the metropolis, too many of its pages would supply an afflicting but instructive comment. That both here, and in all other departments, this increased momentum in the spirit of trade has been followed by results of the most desirable nature, I have myself*, exerted my best powers to evince, at a period when to

* In a variety of articles published at different periods in the Morning Post and Courier; but with most success in the Essay, before cited, on Vulgar Errors on Taxation, which had the advantage of being transferred almost entire to the columns of a daily paper, of the largest circulation, and from thence, in larger or smaller extracts, to several of our Provincial Journals. It was likewise reprinted in two of the American Federalist Papers: and a translation appeared, I have been told, in the Ham-burgh Correspondenten.

present the fairest and most animating features of the system, and to prove their vast and charm-like influence on the power and resources of the nation appeared a duty of patriotism. Nothing, however, was advanced incompatible with the position, which even then I did not conceal, and which from the same sense of duty I am now attempting to display; namely, that the extension of the commercial spirit into our agricultural system, *added* to the over-balance of the same spirit, even within its own sphere; *aggravated* by the operation of our Revenue Laws; and finally *reflected* in the habits, and tendencies of the Laboring Classes; is the ground-work of our calamity, and the main predisposing cause, without which the late *occasions* would (some of them not have existed, and the remainder) not have produced the present distresses.

That Agriculture requires principles essentially different from those of Trade,—that a gentleman ought not to regard his estate as a merchant his cargo, or a shopkeeper his stock,—admits of an easy proof from the different tenure of Landed Property,* and

* The very idea of *individual* or private property, in our present acceptance of the term, and according

from the purposes of Agriculture itself, which ultimately are the same as those of the State of which it is the offspring. (For we do not include in the name of Agriculture the cultivation of a few vegetables by the women of

to the current notion of the *right* to it, was originally confined to moveable things: and the more moveable, the more susceptible of the nature of property. Proceeding from the more to the less perfect right; we may bring all the objects of an independent ownership under five heads;—viz. 1. Precious stones, and other jewels of as easy transfer; 2. The precious metals, and foreign coin taken as weight of metal; 3. Merchandise, by virtue of the contract between the importer and the sovereign in whose person the unity and integrity of the common wealth were represented; i. e. after the settled price had been paid by the former for the permission to import, and received by the latter under the further obligation of protecting the same; 4. The coin of the Country in the possession of the natural subject; and last of all, and in *certain* cases, the live stock, the *peculium a pecus*. Hence, the minds of men were most familiar with the idea in the case of Jews and Aliens: till gradually, the privileges attached to the vicinity of the Bishops and mitred Abbots prepared an asylum for the fugitive Vassal and the oppressed Frankling, and thus laid the first foundations of a fourth class of freeman, that of Citizens and Burghers. To the Feudal system we owe the *forms*, to the Church the *substance* of our liberty. As comment take, first, the origin of towns and cities; next, the holy war waged against slavery and villenage, and with such success that the law had barely to sanction an *opus jam consumi-*

the less savage Hunter Tribes.) If the continuance and independence of the State be its object, the final causes of the State must be its final causes. We suppose the negative ends of a State already attained, viz. its own safety by means of its own strength, and the protection of person and property for all its members, there will then remain its positive ends :—1. To make the means of subsistence more easy to each individual. 2. To secure to each of its members THE HOPE * of bettering his own condition or that of his children. 3. The developement of those faculties which are essential to his Humanity, i. e. to his rational and moral Being. Under the last head we do not mean those degrees of intellectual cultivation which distinguish man from

* The civilized man gives up those stimulants of Hope and Fear, the mixture or alternation of which constitutes the chief charm of the savage life: and yet his Maker has distinguished him from the Brute that perishes, by making Hope an instinct of his nature and an indispensable condition of his moral and intellectual progression. But a natural instinct constitutes a natural right, as far as its gratification is compatible with the equal rights of others. Hence our ancestors classed those who were incapable of altering their condition from that of their parents, as Bondsmen or Villains, however advantageously they might otherwise be situated.

man in the same civilized society, but those only that raise the civilized man above the Barbarian, the Savage, and the Animal. We require, however, on the part of the State, in behalf of all its members, not only the outward means of *knowing* their essential duties and dignities as men and free men, but likewise, and more especially, the discouragement of all such Tenures and Relations as must in the very nature of things render this knowledge inert, and cause the good seed to perish as it falls. Such at least is the appointed Aim of a State : and at whatever distance from the ideal Mark the existing circumstances of a nation may unhappily place the actual statesman, still every movement ought to be in this direction. But the negative merit of not forwarding—but the exemption from the crime of necessitating—the debasement and virtual disfranchisement of any class of the community, may be demanded of every State under all circumstances : and the Government, that pleads difficulties in repulse or demur of this claim, impeaches its own wisdom and fortitude. But as the *specific* ends of Agriculture are the maintenance, strength, and security of the State, so (we repeat) must its *ultimate* ends be the same as those of the State : even as the

ultimate end of the spring and wheels of a watch must be the same as that of the watch. Yet least of all things dare we overlook or conceal, that morally and with respect to the character and conscience of the Individuals, the Blame of unfaithful Stewardship is aggravated, in proportion as the Difficulties are less, and the consequences, lying within a narrower field of vision, are more evident and affecting. An injurious system, the connivance at which we scarcely dare more than regret in the Cabinet or Senate of an Empire, may justify an earnest reprobation in the management of private Estates: provided always, that the System only be denounced, and the pleadings confined to the Court of Conscience. For from this court only can the redress be awarded. All Reform or Innovation, not won from the free Agent by the presentation of juster Views and nobler Interests, and that does not leave the merit of having effected it sacred to the individual proprietor, it were folly to propose, and worse than folly to attempt. Madmen only would dream of digging or blowing up the foundation of a House in order to employ the materials in repairing the walls. Nothing more dare be asked of the State, no other duty is imposed on it, than to

withhold or retract all extrinsic and artificial aids to an injurious system ; or at the utmost to invalidate in extreme cases such claims as have arisen indirectly from the letter or unforeseen operations of particular Statutes : claims that instead of being contained in the Rights of its proprietary Trustees are encroachments on its own Rights, and a destructive Trespass on a part of its own inalienable and untransferable Property — I mean the health, strength, honesty, and filial love of its children.

It would border on an affront to the understandings of our Landed Interest, were I to explain in detail what the plan and conduct would be of a gentleman ; * if, as the result of his own free conviction the *marketable* produce of his Estates were made a subordinate

* Or, (to put the question more justly as well as more candidly) of the Land-owners collectively—for who is not aware of the facilities that accompany a conformity with the general practice, or of the numerous hindrances that retard, and the final imperfection that commonly awaits a deviation from it? On the distinction mentioned, p. 120, between Things and Persons, all law human and divine is grounded. It consists in this: that the former may be *used*, as *mere* means ; but the latter *dare* not be employed as the means to an end without directly or indirectly sharing in that end. See FRIEND, Vol. II.

consideration to the living and moral growth that is to remain on the land. I mean a healthful, callous-handed but high-and-warm-hearted Tenantry, twice the number of the present landless, parish-paid Laborers, and ready to march off at the first call of their country with a SON OF THE HOUSE at their head, because under no apprehension of being (forgive the lowness of the expression) *marched off* at the whisper of a Land-taster! If the admitted rule, the paramount *Self-commandment*, were comprized in the fixed resolve—I will improve my *Estate* to the utmost; and my *rent-roll* I will raise as much as, but no more than, is compatible with the three great ends (before enumerated) which being those of my country must be mine inclusively! This, I repeat, it would be more than superfluous to particularize. It is a problem, the solution of which may be safely entrusted to the common sense of every one who has the hardihood to ask himself the question. But how encouraging even the approximations to such a system, of what fair promise the few fragmentary samples are, may be seen in the Report of the Board of Agriculture for 1816, p. 11, from the Earl of Winchelsea's communication, in

every paragraph of which Wisdom seems to address us in behalf of Goodness.

But the plan of my argument requires the reverse of this picture. I am to ask what the results would be, on the supposition, that Agriculture is carried on in the spirit of Trade; and if the necessary answer coincide with the known general practice, to shew the connection of the consequences with the present state of distress and uneasiness. In Trade, from its most innocent form to the abomination of the African commerce nominally abolished after a hard-fought battle of twenty years, no distinction is or can be acknowledged between Things and Persons. If the latter are part of the concern, they come under the denomination of the former. Two objects only can be proposed in the management of an Estate, considered as a *Stock* in Trade—first, that the Returns should be the largest, quickest, and securest possible; and secondly, with the least out-goings in the providing, over-looking, and collecting the same—whether it be expenditure of money paid for other mens' time and attention, or of the tradesman's own, which are to him *money's worth*, makes no difference in the argument. Am I disposing of a bale of goods? The man whom I most

love and esteem must yield to the stranger that outbids him ; or if it be sold on credit, the highest price, with equal security, must have the preference. I may fill up the deficiency of my friend's offer by a private gift, or loan ; but as a tradesman, I am bound to regard honesty and established character themselves, as *things*, as *securities*, for which the known unprincipled dealer may offer an unexceptionable substitute. Add to this, that the security being equal, I shall prefer, even at a considerable abatement of price, the man who will take a thousand chests or bales at once, to twenty who can pledge themselves only for fifty each. For I do not seek trouble for its own sake ; but among other advantages I seek wealth for the sake of freeing myself more and more from the necessity of taking trouble in order to attain it. The personal worth of those, whom I benefit in the course of the Process, or whether the persons are really benefited or no, is no concern of mine. The Market and the Shop are open to all. To introduce any other principle in Trade, but that of obtaining the highest price with adequate security for Articles fairly described, would be tantamount to the position, that Trade ought not to exist. If this be admitted,

then what as a Tradesman I cannot do, it cannot be my Duty, as a Tradesman, to attempt: and the only remaining question in reason or morality is—what are the proper objects of Trade. If my Estate be such, my plan must be to make the most of it, as I would of any other mode of Capital. As my Rents will ultimately depend on the quantity and value of the Produce raised and brought into the best market from my Land, I will entrust the latter to those who bidding the most have the largest Capital to employ on it: and this I cannot effect but by dividing it into the fewest Tenures, as none but extensive Farms will be an object to men of extensive capital and enterprizing minds. I must prefer this system likewise for my own ease and security. The Farmer is of course actuated by the same motives, as the Landlord: and, provided they are both faithful to their engagements, the objects of both will be: 1. the utmost Produce that can be raised without injuring the estate; 2. with the least possible consumption of the Produce on the Estate itself; 3. at the lowest wages; and 4. with the substitution of machinery for human labor where ever the former will cost less and do the same work. What are the modest remo-

dies proposed by the majority of correspondents in the last Report of the Board of Agriculture? Let measures be taken, that rents, taxes, and wages be lowered, and the Markets raised! A great calamity has befallen us, from importation, the lessened purchases of Government, and "*the evil of a superabundant Harvest*"—of which we deem ourselves the more entitled to complain, because "*we had been long making 112 shillings per quarter of our Corn,*" and of all other articles in proportion. As the best remedies for this calamity, we propose that we should pay less to our Landlords, less to our Laborers, nothing to our Clergyman, and either nothing or very little to the maintenance of the Government and of the Poor; but that we should sell at our former prices to the Consumer!—In almost every page we find deprecations of the Poor Laws: and I hold it impossible to exaggerate their pernicious tendency and consequences. But let it not be forgotten, that in agricultural districts three-fourths of the Poores' Rates are paid to healthy, robust, and (O sorrow and shame!) *industrious, hard-working Paupers* in lieu of Wages—(for men cannot at once work and starve :) and therefore if there are twenty House-keepers in the Parish, who are

not holders of Land, their contributions are so much Bounty Money to the latter. But the Poor Laws form a subject, which I should not undertake without trembling, had I the space of a whole volume to allot to it. Suffice, that this enormous mischief is *undeniably* the offspring of the Commercial System. In the only plausible Work, that I have seen, in favor of our Poor Laws on the present plan, the Defence is grounded: first, on the expediency of having Labor cheap, and Estates let out in the fewest possible portions—in other words, of large Farms and low Wages—each as indispensable to the other, and both conjointly as the only means of drawing Capital to the Land, by which alone the largest Surplus is attainable for the *State*: that is, for the Market, or in order that the smallest possible proportion of the largest possible Produce may be consumed by the Raisers and their families! Secondly, on the impossibility of supplying, as we have supplied, all the countries of the civilized World (India perhaps and China excepted) and of underselling them even in their own markets, if our *working* Manufacturers were not secured by the State against the worst consequences of those failures, stag-nations, and transfers, to which the different

branches of Trade are exposed, in a greater or less degree, beyond all human prevention; or if the *Master* Manufacturers were compelled to give previous security for the maintenance of those whom they had, by the known Law of human Increase, virtually called into existence.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not myself admit this impossibility. I have already denied, and I now repeat the denial, that these are *necessary* consequences of our extended Commerce. On the contrary, I feel assured that the Spirit of Commerce is itself capable of being at once counteracted and enlightened by the Spirit of the State, to the advantage of both. But I *do* assert, that they are necessary consequences of the Commercial Spirit *un-counteracted* and *un-enlightened*, wherever Trade has been carried to so vast an extent as it has in England. I assert too, historically and as matter of fact, that they *have been* the consequence of our commercial system. The laws of Lycurgus, like those of the inspired Hebrew Legislator, were anti-commercial: those of Solon and Numa were at least uncommercial. Now I ask myself, what the impression would have been on the Senate of the Roman or of the Athenian Republic;

if the following proposal had been made to them and introduced by the following preamble. " Conscript Fathers, (or Senators of Athens!) it is well known to you, that circumstances being the same and the time allowed proportional, the human animal may be made to multiply as easily, and at as small an expence, as your sheep or swine; which is meant, perhaps, in the fiction of our Philosophers, that Souls are out of all proportion more numerous than the Bodies, in which they can subsist and be manifested. It is likewise known to you, Fathers! that though in various States various checks have been ordained to prevent this increase of births from becoming such as should frustrate or greatly endanger the ends for which freemen are born; yet the most efficient limit must be sought for in the moral and intellectual prerogatives of man, in their foresight, in their habituation to the comforts and decencies of society, in the pride of independence; but above all in THE HOPE that enables men to withstand the tyranny of the present impulse, and in their expectation of honor or discredit from the rank, character, and condition of their children. Now there are proposed to us the speedy means of at once increasing the

number of the rich, the wealth of those that are already such, and the revenues of the State: and the latter, Fathers! to so vast an amount, that we shall be able to pay not only our own soldiers but those of the monarchs whom we may thus induce to become our Allies. But for this it will be requisite and indispensable that all men of enterprise and sufficiency among us should be permitted, without restraint, to encourage, and virtually to occasion, the birth of many myriads of free citizens, who from their childhood are to be amassed in clusters and employed as parts of a mighty system of machinery. While all things prove answerable to the schemes and wishes of these enterprisers, the Citizens thus raised and thus employed by them will find an ample maintenance, except in such instances where the individual may have rendered himself useless by the effects of his own vices. It dare not, however, be disguised from you, that the nature of the employments and the circumstances to which these citizens will be exposed, will often greatly tend to render them intemperate, diseased, and restless. Nor has it been yet made a part of the proposal, that the employers should be under any bond to counteract such injurious circum-

stances by education, discipline, or other efficient regulations. Still less may it be withheld from your knowledge, O Fathers of the State, that should events hereafter prove hostile to all or to any branch of these speculations, to many or to any one of the number that shall have devoted their wealth to the realization of the same—and the light, in which alone they can thrive, is confessedly subject to partial and even to total eclipses, which there are no means of precisely foretelling! the guardian planets, to whose conjunction their success is fatally linked, will at uncertain periods, for a longer or shorter time, act in malignant oppositions!—Then, Fathers, the Principals are to shift for themselves, and leave the disposal of the calamitous, and therefore too probably turbulent, multitude, now unemployed and useless, to the mercy of the community, and the solicitude of the State: or else to famine, violence, and the vengeance of the Laws!”

If, on the maxims of ancient prudence, on the one hand not enlightened, on the other not dazzled by the principles of Trade, the immediate answer would have been:—“ We should deem it danger and detriment, were we to permit so indefinite and improvident

increase even of our Slaves and Helots : in the case of free Citizens, our countrymen, who are to swear to the same laws, and worship at the same altars, it were profanation! May the Gods avert the Omen!"—If this, I say, would have been their rescript, it may be safely concluded, that the connivance at the same scheme, much more that the direct encouragement of it, must be attributed to that spirit which the ancients did not recognize, namely, the Spirit of Commerce.

But we have shewn, that the same system has gradually taken possession of our agriculture. What have been the results? For him who is either unable or unwilling to deduce the whole truth from the portion of it revealed in the following extract from Lord Winchelsea's Report, whatever I could have added would have been equally in vain. His Lordship speaking of the causes which oppose all attempts to better the Laborers condition, mentions, as one great cause, the dislike the generality of Farmers have to seeing the Laborers rent any land. Perhaps, (he continues) "one of the reasons for their disliking this is, that the land, if not occupied by the laborers, would fall to their own share; and another I am afraid is, that they

rather wish to have the laborers more dependent upon them ; for which reasons they are always desirous of hiring the house and land occupied by a laborer, under pretence, that by that means the landlord will be secure of his rent, and that they will keep the house in repair. This the agents of estates are too apt to give into, as they find it much less trouble to meet six than sixty tenants at a rent-day, and by this means avoid the being sometimes obliged to hear the wants and complaints of the poor. All parties therefore join in persuading the landlord, who it is natural to suppose (unless he has time and inclination to investigate the matter very closely) will agree to this their plan, from the manner in which it comes recommended to him : and it is in this manner that the laborers have been dispossessed of their cow-pastures in various parts of the midland counties. The moment the farmer obtains his wish, he takes every particle of the land to himself, and re-lets the house to the laborer, who by this means is rendered miserable ; the Poor Rate increased ; the value of the Estate to the Landowner diminished ; and the house suffered to go to decay ; which once fallen the tenant will never rebuild, but the landlord must, at

a considerable expence. Whoever travels through the midland counties, and will take the trouble of enquiring, will generally receive for answer, that formerly there were a great many cottagers who kept cows, but that the land is now thrown to the farmers; and if he enquires still farther, he will find that in those parishes the poors' rates have increased in an amazing degree, more than according to the average rise throughout England."—In confirmation of his Lordship's statement I find in the Agricultural Reports, that the county, in which I read of nothing but farms of 1000, 1500, 2000, and 2500 acres, is likewise that in which the poor rates are most numerous, the distresses of the poor most grievous, and the prevalence of revolutionary principles the most alarming. But if we consider the subject on the largest scale and nationally, the consequences are, that the most important rounds in the social ladder are broken, and the Hope, which above all other things distinguishes the free man from the slave, is extinguished. The peasantry therefore are eager to have their children add as early as possible to their wretched pittances, by letting them out to manufactories; while the youths take every opportunity of escaping to towns and cities.

And if I were questioned, as to my opinion, respecting the ultimate cause of our liability to distresses like the present, the cause of what has been called a vicious (i. e. excessive) population with all the furies that follow in its train—in short, of a state of things so remote from the simplicity of nature, that we have almost deprived Heaven itself of the power of blessing us; a state in which, without absurdity, a superabundant Harvest can be complained of as an evil, and the recurrence of the same a ruinous calamity—I should not hesitate to answer—*the vast and disproportionate number of men who are to be fed from the produce of the fields, on which they do not labor.*

What then is the remedy? Who the physicians? The reply may be anticipated. An evil, which has come on gradually, and in the growth of which all men have more or less conspired, cannot be removed otherwise than gradually, and by the joint efforts of all. If we are a christian nation, we must learn to act nationally as well as individually, as Christians. We must remove half-truths, the most dangerous of errors (as those of the poor visionaries called SPENCEANS) by the whole Truth. The Government is employed already in retrenchments; but he who expects imme-

mediate relief from these, or who does not even know that if they do any thing at all, they must for the time tend to aggravate the distress, cannot have studied the operation of public expenditure.

I am persuaded that more good would be done, not only ultimate and permanent, but immediate, good, by the abolition of the Lotteries accompanied with a public and parliamentary declaration of the moral and religious grounds that had determined the Legislature to this act ; of their humble confidence in the blessing of God on the measure ; and of their hopes that this sacrifice to principle, as being more exemplary from the present pressure on the Revenue of the State, would be the more effective in restoring confidence between man and man—I am deeply convinced, that more sterling and visible benefits would be derived from this one solemn proof and pledge of moral fortitude and national faith, than from retrenchments to a tenfold greater amount. Still more, if our Legislators should pledge themselves at the same time, that they would hereafter take council for the gradual removal or counteraction of all similar encouragements and temptations to Vice and Folly, that had alas! been tolerated hitherto, as the easiest way of supplying the exchequer. And truly,

the financial motives would be strong indeed, if the Revenue Laws in question were but half as productive of money to the State as they are of guilt and wretchedness to the people.

Our manufacturers must consent to regulations; our gentry must concern themselves in the *education* as well as in the *instruction* of their natural clients and dependents, must regard their estates as secured indeed from all human interference by every principle of law, and policy, but yet as offices of trust, with duties to be performed, in the sight of God and their Country. Let us become a better people, and the reform of all the public (real or supposed) grievances, which we use as pegs whereon to hang our own errors and defects, will follow of itself. In short, let every man measure his efforts by his power and his sphere of action, and do all he can do! Let him contribute money where he cannot act personally; *but let him act personally and in detail* wherever it is practicable. Let us palliate where we cannot cure, comfort where we cannot relieve; and for the rest rely upon the promise of the King of Kings by the mouth of his Prophet, "BLESSED ARE YE THAT SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS."

FINIS.

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